AMERICA

A CATHOLIC REVIEW OF THE WEEK

MAY 29, 1937

WHO'S WHO

GIL ROBLES, for the present, is residing in Lisbon. After his escape from the Leftists last summer, he made his way into France and, while at Biarritz, was politely given to understand that he was not too welcome under the Blum regime. He is cooperating with the Nationalist Government in Spain but holds no official position. His article this week is his first, and only, statement thus far made for American readers on the Basque question. Answers as curious as those received by the London *Universe* following a short statement by him in January last will probably be received. All agree that Gil Robles is as much opposed to Fascism as are the Basque leaders. . . . MARY SYNON enters our columns for the first time, and is handsomely greeted. She has had much experience as a journalist on the Chicago newspapers and as a syndicate writer. Her novels include *Copper Country, The Good Red Bricks, The Fleet Goes By,* etc. . . . S. ERNEST WILEY, of Nashville, Tenn., is a regular contributor to the "quality group" periodicals. An earlier manuscript from him lamented the critical state of the Pope's health; on request he slanted his article to joy over the Pope's recovery and entry into the eightieth year. . . . ALFRED BARRETT, S.J., has risen to the front ranks of the younger generation of American Catholic poets. He is a theological student at Woodstock College. CARMEN DE ARANGO, it should have been noted earlier, is the translator of the Gil Robles series. She is in the Sheed and Ward editorial department.

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COMMENT

AMERICA was the first and staunchest advocate for the American Committee for Spanish Relief, and its first supporter when it projected its aims. In our issues of March 20 and March 27, we expressed our desire that this Committee would soon be functioning, and in our issue of April 17 we stated: "While it (American Committee for Spanish Relief) is not a Catholic Committee, it deserves the most ardent Catholic support. AMERICA endorses the purposes and aims of the American Committee for Spanish Relief." During the past few weeks, "the purposes and aims" of the American Committee for Spanish Relief have so been changed that AMERICA is forced to withdraw its approbation and to retract its appeal for the support of the Committee. AMERICA stands firm and undeviating, as always, on its original and openly expressed proposition, that all contributions made by American Catholics for relief work in Spain should be distributed by American representatives working under the direction of and in conjunction with the Prelate appointed for the purpose of relief work in Spain, Cardinal Gomá y Tomas, Archbishop of Toledo. Through His Eminence, we have complete assurance that all American monies will be applied, without exorbitant overhead, to civilian victims of the War, solely for food, clothing, shelter, medicines, medical aid and rehabilitation. The American Committee for Spanish Relief, in its public announcements and in the Mass Meeting held in Madison Square Garden, New York, on May 19, pledged itself to send the contributions received by it to the International Red Cross for distribution in Spain. We make no charge against the International Red Cross; but we state that the overhead of this organization is extremely high; that it is of a semi-military nature in that it concerns itself primarily with the wounded and disabled soldiers as an army adjunct; that it pledges itself to expend relief impartially on both sides. According to one official source, it has established four centers on Loyalist territory and two in Nationalist; according to another official source it has established seven centers in Loyalist and three in Nationalist territory. AMERICA, considering the two possibilities of distributing the relief contributed by American Catholics chooses the first—that of distribution by Catholics under the leadership of Cardinal Gomá; and rejects the second—that of distribution through the International Red Cross pledged by the American Committee for Spanish Relief. Hence, AMERICA has made application to the Department of State, Washington, for registration as an agency to collect funds that will be applied to Spanish relief through the direction of Cardinal Gomá who, as Primate of all Spain, will guarantee that help will be given everywhere in Spain and to all classes of Spanish victims and sufferers.

GROOTE versus A Kempis as the author of the *Following of Christ* is being discussed nightly, May 24-28, at the Academy held jointly by AMERICA and the Catholic Book Club at the latter's store. An exhibit of rare editions of the *Imitation* is being shown throughout the week. All are invited.

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RUMORS of growing discord continue seeping out of Leftist-held territory in Spain where rigid news censorship is maintained very much after the fashion of Soviet Russia. Luis Companys had his troubles in Barcelona with an uprising of the uncompromising Anarchists who seized the telephone building for several days. As most of the dispatches to the outside world emanate from this point, it was natural that the first attack of the Red terrorist faction should be aimed at this building. The net gains of the Anarchist party, however, were some 300 men left dead on the streets. Further advices inform us of a complete shake-up in the Valencia Cabinet with the redoubtable Largo Caballero sitting on the fence casting covetous eyes at Juan Negrin, who is now occupying the Premier's chair. How long the new shift will last is not easy to foretell. There are too many banners flying at present to offer any degree of permanency. An observer on the streets of Barcelona or Valencia cannot fail to notice the red-yellow-and-purple of the Valencia Republic, the barred red-and-yellow of Cataluña, the red-and-black of the Anarcho-Syndicalists and the plain red flag of the Communists. Each faction after the fashion of the rugged individualism characteristic of the Spanish race is adamant and uncompromising in its demands, and it is safe to conjecture that the number of divisions in each party are legion. There are too many discordant elements in this make-shift Government to hold out any hope of security and stability to the Spanish Republic.

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ONCE upon a time, long, long ago, Catholics did not go to the pictures on Sunday evenings. Instead of that, they went to a service held in Catholic Churches called Vespers. Some of the old folks will tell you about it, if you inquire, or you can write to Doran Hurley for information. Vespers was not a show, not even a legitimate drama. It was a way of worshiping God, in which the people sang alternative verses of certain songs or Psalms, composed some 3,000 years ago by a Hebrew King called David who said such wonderful things about God and what man is in the sight of God, that nobody in creation has ever since been able to say anything better. Then they sang some hymns, including the Arch-Hymn called Magnificat composed by the Blessed Virgin herself, said some prayers, and then often attended Benediction of the Blessed Sacra-

ment. The curious thing (said a few days ago a holy and learned priest, the Pastor of Saint Henry's Church in Newark, N. J.), is that there was much more romance in going to Vespers than there is in going to the motion pictures. The Vesper romances came to a conclusion. Beginning with the Psalms of David, they frequently wound up at the altar, with a gold ring and the Church's threefold blessing. But romance in the movies never gets any further. It remains forever on the screen, in the land of make-believe, and never advances so far as to march up the aisle leaning on Papa's arm. Some day Catholic young folks may find a way again to attend Vespers as of old. Then the theologians will finish their chapter on the social influence of the liturgy.

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HISTORICAL scholarship and research lost one of its distinguished ornaments in the passing of Charles Homer Haskins of Harvard University. His inclusion among noted American scholars as chief of the division of Western Europe of the American peace commission at Paris, as well as his membership in the Commission on Belgian and Danish affairs and the Committee on Alsace-Lorraine and later the Saar Valley, was the natural culmination of a career marked by the best qualities of a mind, well-informed and well-balanced. The mere enumeration of his degrees from European universities and of his badges of merit and service from foreign countries exemplify the worth and extent of his life-work. He will be best and longest remembered by Catholic scholars for his studies in medieval history undertaken toward the evening of a fruitful life. His four books dealing with the twelfth and thirteenth centuries merited praise from distinguished European scholars, such as Professor Haskins' friend, the late Cardinal Ehrle and Father de Ghellinck, S.J., of Louvain. We hope his passing will not mean a break in the work started so auspiciously at Harvard by the scholarly dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

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WHEN the last vestment has been folded up and laid away in the sacristy drawer, when the organist has locked up the console and the sexton closed the church door, what prospect is there that the secular priest whose funeral was attended by half a hundred or more of his brethren will be recalled when a year later the anniversary of his death returns? This question haunted the soul of a scholarly priest, the Rev. Francis J. Epstein, P.R., A.M., pastor of Saint Michael's Church, Wheaton, Ill., until it moved him to compile a book, entitled *Decet Meminisse Fratrum* (*It Is Fitting to Remember Our Brethren*), a necrology of the priests of the Chicago Archdiocese, from inception in 1844 to the present time. To compile this work, even though the data are restricted to the bare essentials, has meant over five years of tremendously painstaking work on Father Epstein's part, examining old books, records, periodicals, etc.; but his labors have been amply rewarded. Immediately upon the book's appearance, Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago, sent a copy to every member of the United States Hierarchy and to every church and chapel in the Archdiocese "for sacristy use." Already several Bishops have expressed their approval of the idea, and it is hoped that this or some similar means for perpetuating the pious memory of deceased diocesan priests may become universal in our country.

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AMBASSADOR Dodd's luckless sally into the Court Reorganization debate and the later confidences of Mrs. Harriman with the press boys calls our attention to the almost heroic sacrifices of self-expression demanded of our governmental officials. The notice of the introduction of a bill in Congress to rescue the members of the baseball teams from the deep toils of slavery has lately been called to the attention of an unobservant public. Ambassador Dodd's relief explosion seems to have been singularly inefficacious in winning adherents. The two Senators to whom it was addressed were quite unmoved by its historical learning and pathetic pleading. So little was Senator Glass moved, that after its reception he dwelt on the very points emphasized in the dispatch from Berlin and did not even think it worth while to refer to the lengthy discussion of the friend with the danger warnings from the past. The other recipient, Senator Bulkley of Ohio, had already gone hook line and sinker for the President's Court Bill and even resented the implication contained in the Ambassador's exhortation. The Republican leaders wistfully deny knowledge of a billionaire political prospect running loose in the country. Yet, we think the publication of the belated letter serves a good purpose in calling to the attention of our citizens the heroism diplomatic and official silence calls for from governmental officials.

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CALCULATIONS similar to those offered in the quotation herewith republished from the London *Tablet*, issue of May 8, might be a profitable way of spending a Spring evening. It will be found that the propagandistic-controlled American newspapers are day by day winning the Spanish Civil War for the anti-Spanish-anti democracy side:

> The well-informed correspondent in Spain of the Belgian paper, *La Metropolé*, quotes from Salamanca the grand total of Government (Loyalist-Communist) successes, gained, *on paper*, up to April 19. He says the Government claim to have won 1,500,000 square kilometres, which is three times the total surface area of Spain; that they claim to have killed and wounded 2,500,000 of their enemies; to have captured 345,000 prisoners; to have taken 415,000 cannons, 775,000 machine guns; and to have shot down 56,779 aeroplanes. They have captured Huesca twenty-six times, Toledo eleven, Oviedo twenty-two times. Probably few people in England keep the back numbers of the English popular press, but if they turn them up they will find, since last July, a steady succession of highly sensational stories delivered to the public as plainly authentic news and then quietly abandoned as they are found to be without substance.

The American readers of newspapers are so gullible, so very gullible! Check up on Spain!

THE SPANISH REPUBLIC AND BASQUE INDEPENDENCE

Third article by leader of Acción Popular

GIL ROBLES

THE fact that a nucleus of Catholics (the Basques are not indivisibly Catholic) should have resolutely placed itself, armed, at the service of the Marxist Government, has caused confusion in many minds and provided international Communism with one of its great weapons of propaganda against the national Spanish movement.

To a superficial observer the phenomenon is disconcerting. However, one no sooner penetrates into the heart of the problem than the explanation becomes clear.

With the Spanish nation taken as a whole, the four northerly provinces of Vizcaya, Guipuzcoa, Alava, and Navarre are characterized by sharply defined divergences, indisputably racial in origin. The greater part of its population possesses unity of race, with a language and special customs of its own. In the course of history, this racial diversity has not proved an obstacle to the formation of Spanish unity, although this portion of the mother country preserved certain special privileges in the administrative order which, in the course of the nineteenth century, almost completely destroyed the liberal centralist policy derived from France. During the whole of the modern era, the Basques, unprejudiced by their racial characteristics, collaborated, like all Spaniards, in every national enterprise. From the first struggles with the Moors in Castile, in the year 874, to the battle waged with the invincible Armada against England, the Basques contributed to the forging of Spanish nationality. One only is the religion, one only the history, one only the spiritual outlook which fashioned the collective soul of Spain.

The centralist excesses of nineteenth-century liberalism attempted to impose conformity upon the fertile variety found within the confines of the one great nation. As a result these excesses produced a reaction in the Basques. A false direction given to this reaction inspired the contrary excesses of a separatist nationalism, which was founded by Arana Goiri, and supported by youthful elements, many of whom were not even Basques.

The doctrine of Basque nationalism could be summarized as follows: the Basques constitute a race different from that of other Spaniards; according to the principle of nationality, national unity should correspond with racial unity; that is to say, the nation is the supreme political reality which is represented by the State; in its turn, a State cannot be conceived without sovereign, independent and absolute power; thus, the concepts of race, nation state and independence were bound together in logical correlation according to the doctrine of the founders of Basque nationalism.

This principle having been established, the consequences were difficult to apply. According to Basque nationalists, the four provinces whose population was predominantly Basque would form a "country" to which a name was given: *Euzkadi*, that is to say, the country of the Basques. This country, constituting a real nation, would organize as a State, with its own Parliament, its own executive power, its own judicial organs and diplomatic representation abroad.

To attain its goal, Basque nationalism would have to go through various stages. Above all, it was essential to prepare the spirit of the Basques by intense propaganda, aimed at exalting national values. The conviction that the Basque race was not only distinct from the others inhabiting Spanish territory, but superior to them all, in the physical as well as in the intellectual and moral order, would have to be implanted in the minds of the simple peasants of the four provinces. The Basque had to be made to believe that he was infinitely superior to all Spaniards, and that the blame for the fact that his material life did not correspond with that superiority rested entirely with the Spanish State, which smothered the desire of the Basque race for perfection.

Capitalizing the peasant's individualism and attachment to his native soil, the Basque Nationalists told him that he should refuse to do military service beyond the boundaries of the Basque country. Stimulating his egoism, they persuaded the modest farmer that the soil which he tilled was not his because the Spanish State did not allow him to own it. Taking advantage of the scant culture of the people, they assured them that their case was similar to that of Cuba or Ireland, which, through a heroic effort, began by affirming their personality in order later to achieve their independence.

During the years of the Monarchy, Basque sep-

aratist nationalism refrained from adopting too aggressive an attitude. A class of great industrialists, who had gained large profits from the special tributary regime which the Basque provinces enjoyed, financed the movement, without allowing it to exceed the bounds of their personal convenience. It sufficed them to have behind them a restless and discontented populace—a fact which they could proclaim in Madrid in order to secure economic advantages.

This state of affairs was radically changed in 1931. When the Republic was proclaimed and authority generally relaxed, the leaders of Basque nationalism, discarding the tutelage of the great financiers, believed that the moment for attaining the goal of their desires had arrived.

The new Government placed at their disposal a new and most powerful means of propaganda—the religious factor. The Republic from the first adopted an anti-religious policy. A few weeks after it had been proclaimed, many dozens of churches and convents were burning throughout Spain. The leading figures of the new political regime were at no pains to conceal in official documents and in propaganda their sectarian hatred of religion.

The immense majority of the Basque people is profoundly and sincerely religious. The Republic's policy of persecution made a most painful impression on their simple souls. The leaders of separatist nationalism took advantage of this to make the people believe that, in the midst of the general dechristianizing of Spain, the Basque country, bound to the Government and an adherent of Madrid, would be the refuge of persecuted Catholicism. That which, in the simple and believing public, was a sincere religious sentiment, in the leaders of the movement was simply a political factor of tremendous force. Following the doctrinal instructions of the founder of the party, the leading Basque Nationalists openly uphold (I myself have heard them say it many times) that they are born Basques and later through Baptism become Christians. Therefore, they are Basques before they are Christians. Religion is simply a factor of their nationality. The real, the primary, the intangible thing is the Basque race. From it is derived their national essence, and, as a result, their right to sovereignty and to political independence.

Manifestly, for tactical reasons, Basque Nationalism did not wish to draw all the conclusions from its doctrinal premises. It would have alarmed people too much at a time when it was necessary to proceed with caution.

To gain the sympathy of the Rightist forces at the start, they restricted their pretensions to the concession of a mere autonomy and to the consequent rectifying of the centralism of the nineteenth century. The moderation of their claims invited an alliance with the Traditionalists (Requetés) in the four provinces. Together, Basque Nationalists and Traditionalists battled in the elections to the Constituent Cortes for the four Basque provinces. Aguirre, the present head of the Red Government of Bilbao, was elected by Navarra with the Traditionalists.

In the Constituent Cortes the Nationalist deputies acted in agreement with the other Rightist forces. I remember that, in the Parliamentary Commission (of which I formed part) which drew up the project of the Constitution, the only deputy with whom I was in agreement was Mr. Leizaola, now Minister of the Government of Bilbao. Our only difference of opinion arose in studying the powers which might eventually be granted to the various regions. Leizaola, faithful to his Nationalist principles, asked for functions of sovereignty. I limited myself to agreeing to a decentralization of non-sovereign functions, in accordance with the basic principles of Catholic regionalist doctrine.

The alliance of Tradionalists and Nationalists did not last long. The latter adopted the separatist policy, and little by little withdrew completely from all the other Rightist groups. Protected by constitutional authorization, they voted by plebiscite a Statute of Autonomy, which was their rallying-flag in the elections of November, 1933.

As soon as that Cortes, in which Popular Action had a considerable influence, had been constituted, I held, at its request, a long conference with Aguirre. During this interview, the President of the Basque Government (who in former years had so often taken part with me in the spread of Catholic principles) told me that the Basques wanted, above all, the Statute of Autonomy; that the Leftists had promised it to them, but that they would prefer to be indebted for it to the Rightists.

I tried to examine the problem dispassionately, pointing out to Aguirre that the racial characteristics of the Basques did not entitle them to aspire to an autonomy bordering on independence; that, above racial differences (much less important than they seemed), should be placed community of religion and of history, the spiritual links which, in the course of centuries, have formed national unity; that the privileges which the Basques had enjoyed for centuries had, for their foundation and justification, not only the special characteristics of the region, but the great services they had rendered to the cause of Spanish nationality; that the Rightists were willing to concede to the so-called Basque country an ample administrative autonomy but never political autonomy, which would imply the granting of sovereign powers belonging only to the State; that the aspirations of the Basque Nationalists which, in point of fact, ran counter to the unity of Spain, were inadmissible, as was proved by the fact that Navarra herself, the purity of whose Basque blood no one could doubt, had become alienated from the other three provinces; nor did the province of Alava subscribe to the separatist position.

It was not possible to come to an agreement. Negotiations were broken off. Several days later, Mr. Monzón, now Minister of the Red Government of Bilbao, told me that, since the Rightists had not acceded to their desires, the Basque Nationalists were willing to ally themselves with the Leftists. For them, the essential was to succeed in obtaining an autonomy bordering on independence. To achieve this end, they were willing to form any

kind of alliance. If the Rightists did not support them, they would throw themselves into the arms of the Communists.

A parliamentary occurrence showed how strong was the Basques' separatist tendency. A question of procedure relative to the Statute project was being discussed, and, in the course of a speech he was making, Aguirre spoke of his love for his country. "Which is your Lordship's country," asked a Rightist deputy, "Spain or the Basque Country?"

"The Basque Country," replied the Nationalist leader.

There followed a tumultuous outburst. The Rightist deputies accused the Basques of being enemies of Spain. To prove the opposite, they asked them to give a cheer for Spain then and there. All the Basque deputies remained silent.

During the summer of 1934, the Basque Nationalists collaborated with the Leftists in preparing for the revolutionary rising in October. In the month of August, the Basques promoted a feeling of rebellion in the *Ayuntamientos* of Guipuzcoa and Vizcaya; they organized a protest which began with a secret reunion in Zumarraga, in which Indalecio Prieto spoke; and, seized by the spirit of revolution, they joined forces in Bilbao with the Socialists when the rising of Asturias and Cataluña broke out. The alliance of the Basques and the Leftists had been sealed.

In the elections of February, 1936, the Basque Nationalists aligned themselves with the Socialists and Communists, opposing the other Rightist parties and committing the greatest outrages.

Later, when the Leftist mobs began to carry out their subversive scheme and were daily assassinating in the streets and setting fire to churches, not even one of the Basque deputies stood up in Parliament to protest. Moreover, when Mr. Calvo Sotelo and I appealed to the Government, the Basque deputies aligned themselves with the assassins and church incendiarists, and gave a vote of confidence to the Government of the Popular Front. This Government, faithful to Moscow's order to destroy Spanish unity, promised them autonomy and independence. So as not to make foes of their allies, they disregarded the dictates of their Catholic consciences. For them, the Basque Country was the fundamental thing. If, in order to obtain it, it was necessary to extend the hand of friendship to the declared enemies of their religion, they would do so.

The military rising broke out, supported by all the Rightist forces. The Basques allied themselves with the Communists. In an effort to justify their attitude, they have spoken of the lack of understanding shown by the Rightists, who denied all individuality to the Basque region. Nothing is more inaccurate. Popular Action, which has always been a sincerely regionalist party, favors the movement. The Requetés, who have constantly defended the historic privileges of the Basque region, support it. The leaders of the movement, particularly General Franco, have promised to respect regional characteristics. There is, therefore, no lack of comprehension on the part of the Rightists.

The result is that these leaders are not willing to grant political independence to the Basques. The result is that the forces supporting the army are not willing to allow the sacred unity of the nation to be broken. For this reason, the Basque Separatists have allied themselves with the Communists in exchange for the realization of their chimeric dreams of independence.

To them, Catholicism was a mere political factor. That is why they have not been loath to sell their beliefs for the purchase of an illusory independence.

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THE TRUTH ABOUT GUERNICA

THE SADDEST truth is that Guernica, the old Basque capital, is a mass of ruins, with nothing left of it except debris, the barracks, the Church of Santa Maria, and a population mourning its 800 dead. The destruction of the town is one of the most tragic and most cruel episodes of the Spanish Civil War, and one of the most revolting.

The second truth is that the Bilbao Government is responsible for one of the most atrocious lies that has been told about the Spanish Civil War. When, on Monday evening, April 26, and on the day following, Guernica was rocked by explosions and devoured by flames, the Bilbao Government released to the newspaper correspondents a statement that Guernica was bombed by Nationalist airplanes, of German make and piloted by Germans. The story was issued from Bilbao before any of the facts were verified, and was accepted by the American war correspondents on Government authority.

The third and final truth has been established. It is based on indisputable facts and confirmed by logic. Guernica was destroyed by explosives set off by the retreating Anarchist and Communist soldiers of the Basque forces. In the center of the town were four large craters that could have been made only by mines. Guernica was burned by gasoline poured over the houses by the Communist irresponsible leaders, and then ignited by hand grenades. The town which the Basque army was unable to hold was demolished as it was being evacuated.

These facts have been established by the foreign correspondents who investigated the ruins of Guernica, by the sworn statements of the survivors, by the repudiation of the Bilbao charges by the Nationalist army and Government. On the day of the alleged air-raid, weather conditions prevented the Nationalists from flying. Therefore, there could be no bombing. At that same time, the Basque defenders were abandoning Guernica and the Nationalists had not yet advanced. These are the facts stripped of the lies.

Guernica is a Communist atrocity. Before, Irun, Malaga and Eibar were Communist atrocities. Next will be Bilbao which the Communists, if they are able, will destroy before they surrender. The Bilbao Government fears this. On May 19, it ordered that explosives and incendiary material be turned in lest Anarchists mine and burn Bilbao.

PIUS ELEVENTH ENVOY OF THE KING

Homage and greetings on eightieth birthday

S. ERNEST WILEY

JUST as the sun is brightest when a dark storm cloud has passed, so is the flame of a cherished life most brilliant when the hovering, black hand of death has been pushed away, and the spark of health and vigor fanned again into a ruddy glow. Even the return of a disappearing fortune, the rejuvenation of a fading pomp or dying power brings a greater sense of appreciation than ever could have been experienced if there had been no vicissitude or fear. And in a much deeper and higher sense is that true when a fearful shadow has been cast by the desperate illness of a friend—of one who has been an unswerving guide and tireless helper in the struggles, trials and heartaches besetting a rugged path.

It is natural, then, that the Catholic world—and all the world—should experience a boundless joy as His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, reaches his eightieth birthday, with the blush of health returned to his kindly smile and something of his old vigor stealing back into his stride. For it was but the other day that his desperate illness did indeed hover like a black, threatening cloud, laden with the fearful prospect of the loss of one who had been to all the world an unswerving guide and tireless helper. Throughout his long pontificate, the uncompassed zeal of Pius had proven his exalted friendship for the world, as he extended to mankind, beset with trials, struggles and a thousand ills, the tender hand of fatherly support and guidance, opening to a war-torn, disease-ridden society a heart filled with a father's anxiety and solicitude, and displaying a paternal keenness to detect the basic ill and to teach the method of its cure.

It was not the Catholic world alone, but also myriad ranks of those outside the Church who learned in their anxiety to appreciate the wisdom and vigor of the Holy Father's efforts to heal a stricken society. And, as they joined in their hopes and prayers, so may they be united now in their joy that he is spared to push on with the stupendous program which he has inaugurated and borne so far along the way to ultimate success.

Just the other day, it seemed a desperate hope; for a man approaching the turn of four-score years grows weary, and death is expected to stand close to him. The exhausting duties of a pontificate which ranks among the longest in the history of the Church must leave their mark. And indeed the pontificate of Pius XI takes its place, not only among the longest but likewise among the most active, as well as those most sorely beset with trials and difficulties. And yet, despite it all, the desperate hope has become reality; and Pius enjoys increasing health as the turn of his four-score years is reached.

When Achille Ratti became His Holiness, Pope Pius XI, one might indeed have found cause for surprise in the temperate wisdom, tremendous resourcefulness and unflagging energy of the retiring and unheralded librarian, who had spent all of the normally active years of a lifetime hidden away, as it were, among books and manuscripts. But as his pontificate unrolled, and accomplishments followed one another in rapid order, astonishment might rather have been occasioned by the fact that he could have been left so long among the books and manuscripts—that his great ability and energy as a great ecclesiastical administrator were not discovered earlier.

The quiet, studious years of Achille Ratti, spent in the Ambrosian Library of Milan and the Vatican Library at Rome, came to a sudden and definite end when, during the last year of the Great War, he was sent by Pope Benedict XV as a special envoy to the little, newly established nation of Poland. Following the successful completion of that delicate mission, he was appointed Archbishop of Milan and raised to the Cardinalate. Even then, to an interested, watching world, his election to the Chair of Peter, on the fourteenth ballot of the conclave following the death of the war-stricken Benedict XV, came as a surprise. He was as yet an unknown figure.

And from the very day of his coronation, the tone of character which must have developed during his long, quiet years in the libraries, guided the course of the new Pontiff. Research, thoroughness, consuming interest, unfailing constancy, as well as a masterful pen—these were the librarian's qualities which came with Achille Ratti to the Throne of Peter.

He spent eleven months of his new pontificate in a sustained, penetrating study of the symptoms

of a world which was sick and nauseated, determining the basic ill and its cure. Then he outlined a great, ambitious program, which reached into widely diversified fields of action; but every phase of it, like the ministrations to the various parts of a pain-racked body, was directed towards the cure of the mad, sick world. The malady persists, it is true, because the program of cure, though carried far, has met unnumbered obstacles and remains incomplete. Those concerned with the best interests of society could not but hope and pray that the fatherly physician might be spared—that Pius might be left to develop and advance his far-reaching program.

If you were to seek one from the many accomplishments of his long pontificate which would summarize the program he engendered, you well might choose the establishment of the Feast of Christ the King. For that Feast, with all that it implies, does indeed point out Pius' cure for the malady which has laid the world prostrate. His clear vision saw what was ailing the world and he took immediate steps to apply the remedy.

The world is truly sick; and the festering sores of strife and war break out upon it because it is weak; and it is weak because it has cut itself away from the source of its strength and vitality. Men have forgotten or denied their dependence upon God. And the inauguration of the Feast of Christ the King was a fervent effort to bring mankind to a renewed consciousness of that relationship. It conveyed to men the Supreme Pontiff's plea that they recognize their Divinely established duty of allegiance—of fealty, homage and obedience to their King.

To implant in the minds of men the Kingship of Christ, to extend the boundaries of the Kingdom of Christ, and to impress on the hearts of men that embracing charity which is the hallmark of the subjects of Christ—such was his ambitious program. And laboring with each phase of it in turn, the watchword must ever have throbbed in his mind and animated his courage: for the Kingdom of Christ.

Progressively, individual souls were shown the way of their return to allegiance to Christ. The Encyclical, *Rerum Omnium* (1923), pointed out the way of spiritual advance to clergy and laity alike. The *Miserentissimus Redemptor* (1928) supplied a further motive for that advance by showing the burning love of the Sacred Heart for men—the consuming love of the Christ Who is the King. And the *Casti Connubii* (1930) made clear the way to the rehabilitation of the very bulwark of the realm of Christ, the Christian family, through a recognition of the beauty and sacredness of marriage and the holy obligations which its acceptance necessarily entails.

And society, the aggregate of men in relationship with their fellow men, was shown the way of loyalty to Christ through the exercise of justice and charity, according to the principles outlined in the great Encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno*. In it the Holy Father showed how men might serve their own best interests by respecting the laws of the Kingdom of Christ, which so emphatically enjoin deference for the rights of one's neighbor.

The long series of concordats—there have been ten of them, with Poland, Lithuania, Rumania, Germany, Italy and the rest—encouraged nations to recognize their allegiance to their unearthly King by establishing bonds of friendship between themselves and that King's earthly envoy. Each of those concordats made its demands; but each likewise granted its concessions. For Pius has ever shown that he knows how to make concessions, to grant privileges and lower unessential barriers for the enhancement of the interests of the King, to exercise the embracing charity of the King for the winning of souls to fealty.

Throughout his long pontificate, he has displayed an unflagging, dauntless zeal in his efforts to extend to all the world the realm of Christ. That fact is proven by his ceaseless attempts to reunite the dissident Eastern Churches with the See of Peter, and by his constant encouragement and support of the Missions in pagan lands, to which problems he has brought the weight of his tireless energy and exhaustive study.

To all the subjects of the vast realm he has issued the charge that they prove themselves not merely wearers of a sort of badge or uniform which might distinguish them, but ardent, zealous defenders of the Kingship of Christ. He has called on each to contribute his little bit, through Catholic Action, to the strengthening and the advancement of the Kingdom of Christ.

For the Kingdom of Christ—like a compass, that ideal has guided Pius, Envoy of the King, through the arduous labor of his long and strenuous pontificate. The wisdom and zealous energy which he has displayed in following that ideal prompted the Catholic world's desperate hope and ardent prayers for his recovery—for a return of such health as would enable him to struggle on. There was deep assurance that, spared and strengthened by the King he serves, he could do much more to spread the Realm of Christ, and to cure, in doing so, a mad, sick world. Through his Christlike spirit of appreciation, commiseration and charity, he could still promote the lasting peace and solid happiness of men and nations.

But a man must be expected to grow weary with the approach of four-score years; and when the last of those years have been filled with ceaseless labor and every manner of bitter trial and heart-rending disappointment, he might have been expected slowly to fail beneath the heavy load, bringing to the Catholic world, grown at last appreciative, the sorrowful prospect of bereavement. Indeed, it would even seem that Christ's own charity might demand that His zealous laborer be granted a final rest and peace.

Instead, the Charity of Christ has looked to the world and its needs rather than to the Envoy's right to peace and rest. The hosts of mankind, to whom Pius has proven himself a friend, physician and fatherly guide, may still in their joy proclaim him Christ's earthly counterpart, Envoy of the King.

CATHOLIC CONCERNS WITH THE 14TH AMENDMENT

Liberties we lose if it breaks down

MARY SYNON

MOST of us American-born Catholics—especially those of us without legalistic background or training—have assumed that our religious liberty has been assured to us by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

That famous fulcrum of freedom which begins, *Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibit the free exercise thereof,* has usually been regarded by us as authority in recognition of our right to practise the forms of a faith not generally approved by the authorities of the thirteen original States at the time of the First Congress, a fortification set by the Founding Fathers against the intolerances and bigotries of contemporary and subsequent lawmakers. Upon that assumption most of the oratory concerning religious freedom—not only our own but of all people in the land—has been based.

As a matter of cold legal history, however, our freedom of worship is protected not by the First but by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution; and any attempt to change that amendment, either by the direct process of constitutional amendment offered by Senator Borah or by the more subtle method of extension of membership in the Supreme Court advanced by President Roosevelt, is an attack upon our rights of citizenship.

For, just as it was the case of *Permoli vs. Municipality* which, in 1845, brought the Supreme Court decision that the First Amendment to the Federal Constitution did not protect the religious freedom of the citizen against legislation passed by the individual states and their subdivisions, so it was the case of *Meyer vs. The State of Nebraska* which, in June, 1923, brought the Supreme Court decision that the Fourteenth Amendment, advanced as the law involved by Arthur F. Mullen of Nebraska, counsel for the interests fighting for freedom of worship, protected the citizen from any interference by individual states or their subdivisions with that basic liberty.

The Permoli case, argued on the First Amendment—the Fourteenth was not advanced until 1866 and not ratified until 1868—followed the passage of an ordinance by the city of New Orleans which forbade funeral rites in any church. Father Permoli, pastor of the old St. Louis Church, knowing that the immediate occasion which had caused the passage of the ordinance, an epidemic which had swept the city, had passed, permitted the funeral of a French parishioner, LeBlanc. For this he was arrested and convicted of violation of the ordinance. The Supreme Court of Louisiana sustained the conviction. So did the Supreme Court of the United States, on the ground that the First Amendment did not protect the religious freedom of the citizen from unfriendly State or other local action. It merely, the Court held, provided that Congress should not enact unfriendly legislation.

From 1845 until 1923, two years less than eighty, that decision stood as the supreme, irrevocable law of the land. Throughout that time any State or municipality might have passed and enforced any law hostile to any religion. Only the District of Columbia was sacrosanct from invasion of religious freedom. Nothing but the fact that few States enforced existing laws or passed new laws against freedom of worship prevented legalized oppression of religious practice.

Among other states Nebraska passed certain laws in restraint of a citizen's freedom. Although there had been no agitation in favor of any change in the school system there, the legislature of 1919 failed—by only one vote in the State Senate and after almost unanimous passage in the house—to pass a projected bill requiring every child in the State to attend the public schools. Failing that, it enacted the "Simon Law," providing that no foreign language could be used in any private, parochial, or religious school below the ninth grade.

Nebraska had then, as it still has, many parochial schools, some of them Catholic, others Lutheran. The latter used the German and Swedish languages as well as English. The former used in various schools practically all the modern languages of Continental Europe. Both Catholic and Lutheran schools used foreign languages as media in the teaching of religion, basing the practice on the idea that the school supplemented the home training in religion given by fathers and mothers who, in many cases, knew little or no English. The Simon Law was therefore not merely a blow at the use of foreign languages. It was a body blow at religious training in the parochial schools.

Eventually the Supreme Court of Nebraska declared that the law, while constitutional, had not been intended to act as its opponents thought. The Nebraska legislature then passed a second law to show that it had meant exactly what it had said in the first law. That second law, well provided with teeth and forbidding any person to speak in or otherwise use a foreign language in any school of Nebraska below the ninth grade, was finally haled for decision into the Supreme Court of the United States when, at the request of Mullen, two cases, one under the first and one under the second law, were consolidated for hearing.

At the request of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of the Missouri District, Mullen, who had come into the litigation as the counsel for St. Francis Polish Catholic School of South Omaha, took charge of the combined cases before the United States Supreme Court. The Iowa and Ohio cases were already in the court, though not decided. In the course of the Iowa case Mr. Justice McReynolds had asked its counsel if he admitted the right of the state to require all children to attend the public schools. The counsel had answered in the affirmative. Mullen, asked the same question by McReynolds in the Nebraska case, replied in the negative, planting his case on these two propositions: first, that the right to maintain private schools was an inherent and inalienable right; second, that those responsible for private schools had the right to teach in them any subject that was not seditious or immoral.

In both brief and oral argument he contended that the Nebraska law or any law which prevented in any way the right to maintain private and parochial schools or that abridged the freedom of education in those schools in relation to religion violated the Fourteenth Amendment.

• By a seven-to-two vote the Supreme Court held the Nebraska law unconstitutional, thereby not only freeing obscure Robert Meyer, who had been arrested for having taught the story of Joseph in German during the noon lunch hour in a country Lutheran school in Zion's Parish of Hamilton County and establishing a precedent for the Oregon case which followed, but also incorporating in the highest law of the land the broadest interpretation of individual liberty yet achieved in any existing government. The case is summarized thus:

Robert T. Meyer—Plaintiff in Error v. the State of Nebraska.

Constitutional Law—Guaranty of Liberty—what included: 1. The liberty guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment to the Federal Constitution denotes not merely freedom from bodily restraint, but also the right of the individual to contract, to engage in any of the common occupations of life, to acquire useful knowledge, to marry, establish a home, to bring up children, to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, and generally to enjoy those privileges long recognized by common law as essential to the ordinary pursuit of happiness by free men.

Constitutional Law—Interference with Liberty —Protection of Public Interests.

2. The liberty protected by the Fourteenth Amendment of the Federal Constitution may not be interfered with, under the guise of protecting the public interests, by legislative action which is arbitrary or without reasonable relation to some purpose within the competency of the State to effect.

3. Determination by the legislature of what constitutes proper exercise of police power is not final and conclusive, but is subject to supervision by the courts.

Parent and Child—Duty to educate Child.

4. It is the natural duty of a parent to give his children education suitable to their station in life.

Constitutional Law—forbidding teaching of foreign languages in school—Violation of Liberty.

5. Forbidding the teaching in school of any language other than the English language until the pupil has passed the 8th grade violates the guaranty of liberty in the Fourteenth Amendment of the Federal Constitution, in the absence of sudden emergency rendering knowledge of the foreign language clearly harmful.

Constitutional Law—who protected by.

6. The protection of the Federal Constitution extends to those who speak other languages as well as to those who speak English.

Mr. Justice McReynolds delivered the opinion of the seven who held the Nebraska law unconstitutional. In reviewing the case, he said, "While this court has not attempted to define with exactness the liberty thus guaranteed, the term has received much consideration, and some of the included things have been definitely stated. Without doubt, it denotes not merely freedom from bodily restraint, but also the right of the individual to contract, to engage in any of the common occupations of life, to acquire useful knowledge, to marry, establish a home, and bring up children, to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and generally to enjoy those privileges long recognized by common law as essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness by free men." The summary is quite complete.

In view of the fact that the two outstanding issues of American political life today are concerned with the continuance in status quo of the Fourteenth Amendment and the ratification of the so-called Child Labor Amendment which would give to the Federal Government the right to control the lives and destinies of all those under eighteen years of age, it is more than important—it is, in fact, vitally necessary—that we Catholics should know what we stand to lose or to gain by the outcome. The passage of the Child Labor Amendment, instead of protecting children, would give to the Government at Washington greater power than Stalin or Hitler or Mussolini exercises over youth. The breakdown of the Fourteenth Amendment will put us back to where we were ninety years ago; and I, as one Catholic, would rather trust the Horse-and-Buggy Supreme Court which still counts such men as McReynolds and Brandeis and Butler in its membership than trust the Horse-and-Buggy morality of those days dominated by that Red Fox of the Empire State, Martin Van Buren.

WITH SCRIP AND STAFF

ABBE LUGAN'S TROUBLE OVER "FOLLOWING OF CHRIST"

ON a glorious summer day the Pilgrim once took a walk through the countryside around Tuxedo, N. Y., with the late Abbé Alphonse Lugan, the gifted French author and lecturer on social questions. So intent were the two of us upon talking that we failed at first to note the increasing complexity of the landscape. We were subconsciously looking for a place to sit down and argue in peace when we woke up, as it were, and found ourselves stumbling over amazing contraptions that seemed to have been placed there to vex the pedestrian. Further examination showed that we were in the midst of a miniature golf course. If you remember the year when these goofy affairs appeared like rashes all over our nation, you can determine the date.

The Abbé Lugan had no place in his philosophy for miniature golf; but he was eagerly expounding another subject, his theory concerning that immortal book, the *Following of Christ*. He had the idea that the *Imitation*, to use its old and familiar title, had slowed up the development of the Church's social Gospel by centering the spiritual life too exclusively upon the problems of the individual. This same idea is expressed in his book, *Social Principles of the Gospel*, published in English translation by Macmillan in 1928. Lugan quotes there the strictures on the *Imitation* expressed by the German Protestant philosopher, Rudolf Eucken, in his work, *Die Lebensanschauungen der grossen Denker*. Eucken harshly charges the *Imitation* with "religious utilitarianism," of preaching a life of solitude and silence and the continual thought of death. "Social relations are left out as though they were not the normal state of things."

Lugan quotes, however, the answer to Eucken given by Father H. Pesch, S.J., to the effect that "the author of the *Imitation* did not profess to give a comprehensive view of life but dealt with it from one side only, namely, from its aspect as the vestibule of eternity and the preparation for the hereafter."

Lugan, in his book just cited, finds Pesch's answer "satisfactory." He explains that the various aspects of human life may be theoretically separated one from the other, for a particular purpose, and says:

> It is to be desired, however, that devotional books, which are usually the only moral or theological works read by the great mass of Christians, should be less inclined to split up the unity of life, lest their readers be led to believe that personal salvation and social existence are on completely separate planes, if not opposed to each other. This may partially explain why so many worthy people look on religion as a purely private and isolated matter which should confine its influence to the depths of the soul.

All this is perfectly true, as a general principle, and its truth has become widely recognized by spiritual writers in our time; e.g. such writers as Bede Jarrett, Martindale, De Grandmaison, Raoul Plus, Peter Lippert, and an ever-increasing number of others. But I believe, as I told good Abbé Lugan at the eighth hole of the miniature golf course, it is quite off the track to blame religious individualism upon the *Following of Christ*.

The obvious answer to such a criticism is that those very men who pushed the spiritual life farthest out into the uttermost confines of active, practical devotion to one's neighbor were passionately devoted to the meditations of the Hermit of Zwolle, now concluded to have been Gerard de Groote.

Saint Ignatius Loyola was so devoted to the *Imitation* that it held the next place in his mind after the Sacred Scriptures themselves and the Breviary. The Gospels and the *Imitation* were the only books he expected his retreatants to read during the time of the Spiritual Exercises. Yet, says Lugan himself, the followers of Ignatius "have been distinguished by the practical and social sense of their spirituality," and "Ignatius Loyola never held that the realization of Christianity was the peculiar privilege of Religious in the technical sense. His Spiritual Exercises are for all social categories."

Ignatius recognized, as all other apostolic men have recognized, who cultivate the *Following of Christ*, that the book does two great things incredibly well. It strikes to the very root of disordered human affections, which in turn are at the root of all social disorder, all violations of social justice or human rights. It tracks these roots of disorder into their subtlest psychological windings, as the dentist tracks an infected nerve. Then it establishes the soul solidly, unshakeably in the understanding of its own destiny and in its fellowship with the Redeemer. This basic task established, there is a foundation for the social virtues to build upon.

The recent discovery that Gerard de Groote was the book's author, or rather the author of the book that Thomas of Kempen re-edited into the familiar *Imitation of Christ*, throws light, too, upon the very problem that troubled the Abbé Lugan. It shows that the book was not the work of a natural recluse, a spiritual Caspar Milquetoast, but the intimate journal of a man who knew worldly life intimately, and wrote of those terrific spiritual conflicts that confront every man who consecrates himself to the service of God and neighbor. Gerard does not give, nor attempt to give, all the answers to the questions the world asks today. But he does answer those questions that must first be met, if we are not to be sounding brass and tinkling cymbals.

THE PILGRIM

EDITOR

LABOR AND THE TRUSTS

WHEN the Supreme Court upheld the Wagner Act in the Jones & Laughlin case, we expressed some fear that the principle on which the decision was based might be used to hamper labor in the exercise of its right to organize and to strike. That fear is shared, it seems, by Matthew Woll, vice president of the American Federation of Labor. Although the Act affirms the right to organize and to bargain collectively, he observes, "it does not change other existing laws in relation to labor and labor activities. Therein lies potential danger."

In the decision in the Jones & Laughlin case, it will be remembered, certain acts attributed to the corporation were brought under review. It was alleged that the corporation was interfering with the right of its employes to organize, that this interference had brought about a cessation of labor in many of the plants, and that if continued it would lead to a general strike. But a strike would have interfered with the flow of inter-State commerce in which the corporation was almost wholly engaged, and the Court ruled that such an interference was unlawful and could be restrained by law.

The case against employers engaged wholly or chiefly in inter-State commerce is clear. They can do nothing that is calculated to interfere with the right of Congress to regulate that commerce. But the shoe is on the other foot, observes Mr. Woll, when by calling a strike labor interferes with the flow of inter-State commerce. The decision of the Court was based on its previous decision in the Coronado case in which it was held that the Miners' Union was forbidden to strike, since a strike would stop the shipping of minerals out of the State in which they were mined.

We do not think that Mr. Woll is finding ghosts where they do not exist. Certainly the Supreme Court was emphatic in declaring that acts which stopped the flow of inter-State commerce or seriously and directly interfered with it, were unlawful. Under the Wagner Act, it is true, the ban is placed on the employer only. But the anti-trust laws still exist, and it would seem that they could be invoked with force, whenever necessary, against organized labor.

Here we have a conflict of rights. Labor is free to organize and to bargain collectively, but Congress is bound to regulate inter-State commerce in the interest of the public good. Probably in most cases a clash can be averted by the agencies established by the Wagner Act itself, but conflict is always possible. The solution would seem to lie in amendments to the Sherman and the Clayton anti-trust laws. In the debates which preceded the enactment of the Sherman law, it was agreed that its provisions should not extend to organized labor, but the agreement was soon forgotten. Certainly, these Acts should no longer be used to nullify the right of workers to organize, to bargain collectively, and, given the necessary conditions, to strike.

THE POPE'S BIRTHDAY

ON May 31, our Holy Father, Pope Pius XI, celebrates the eightieth anniversary of his birth. Seldom in history have a man's four-score years been turned with greater joy to all men who seek peace and righteousness here on earth, with greater and holier triumph following long days when bodily illness seemed ready to claim its due. The words once spoken by our Holy Father in profound sense of his vast responsibility are still true: "With the assistance of Divine Grace, the destiny of the human family lies in Our hands"; and those hands are surer and mightier than ever.

FREEDOM OF WORSHIP

THAT religious freedom exists in Russia is the decision of the Supreme Court in Nanking, China. As a result an American woman, Nina Ragsdale, loses $375,000, half of an estate which was left by her Russian foster-mother, on condition that religious freedom existed in the Soviet Union.

That Miss Ragsdale loses this sum may, in the long run, be good for her own soul. But with due respect to Chinese legal wisdom, it is sheer hypocrisy for the Moscow *Izvestiya* to claim, as it does in its issue of May 18, that such religious freedom exists. Communists in this country hand out misleading, piously worded folders to American Catholics, asserting that it is untrue "that the Communists destroyed religion in the Soviet Union," and that "there is the same freedom of worship in the Soviet Union as in America."

How illusory is such a statement is seen from the simple fact that there are left today, or rather were last year, but 160 to 200 Catholic ecclesiastics in the entire Soviet Union (U. S. S. R.). At least 110 of these—supposing this many are still living under the unspeakable hardships they are obliged to endure—are imprisoned on Solovietsky Island, at Yaroslav, and other places of exile or forced labor. The whereabouts of most of those that are not imprisoned are unknown.

Add to this, the growth of militant atheists in the Soviet Union from 87,033 in 1927 to 5,673,000 in 1932, the natural result of a militant war against religion, officially countenanced and

ORIALS

JUSTICE VAN DEVANTER RETIRES

THE eyes of the nation are now upon the President as Justice Willis Van Devanter, after twenty-six years of service, leaves the Supreme Bench. It is the President's first opportunity to appoint a judge of his own choice; his opportunity also to give tangible proof, if he wishes, that his aim in refashioning the judiciary is something else than a quest for personal power. In the meanwhile, as the opponents of the Judiciary Bill are unanimous in affirming, this occurrence, far from ending the contest, will give it new life, and will more clearly emphasize the fundamental questions at issue.

ORSHIP IN THE U. S. S. R.

rewarded by the Government, so much so that Emilian Yaroslavsky, president of the Association of Militant Atheists, was appointed president of the Commission of Purification for the Communist party in the U. S. S. R.

Under the present Constitution, claiming to guarantee "religious freedom," any parents who venture to speak to their child about God are liable to the severest penalties for "religious propaganda." Even to mention the name of God in the course of an article or lecture is to commit a criminal act.

Religious freedom means the freedom to exercise the teachings of religion, among which are the religious education of the young, the practice of social and charitable works under religious auspices, the publication of religious writings, and the opportunity to practise one's religion without fear of dire political and economic consequences. None of these elements of freedom are even remotely thinkable under the present Soviet regime, where State authorization must be obtained if a priest is even to go on a sick-call. Though in theory one may attend religious services, those who sponsor such services—an intolerably complicated legal process—do so at the risk of their lives and liberties and at incredible expense; those who attend them violate the cardinal principle of the Communist party, which governs all private as well as public life in the U. S. S. R., and hang around their necks the rope of economic suicide.

Our Communist brethren have dug up a poor bait with which to lure American youth.

A CARDINAL'S WARNING

NONE too late was the warning uttered by His Eminence, Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago, when on May 18 he spoke to more than 500 prelates and priests of the Chicago Archdiocese, at their quarterly conference, concerning the real facts as to the Hitler treatment of the Catholics in Germany. It was significant of the gravity of his words that when he had concluded, his hearers requested him to set aside a day in all churches in the Archdiocese to hear the facts concerning the Nazi attack upon the Church and to offer special prayers for the people of Germany persecuted for their religion.

No wonder that *Der Angriff* and other Nazi organs reacted at once with an outburst of characteristic fury against the Cardinal's plain speaking. He touched a very sensitive nerve in their system when he declared:

> Perhaps you will ask how it is that a nation of 60,000,000 people, intelligent people, will submit in fear and servitude to an alien, an Austrian paper hanger, and a poor one at that, I am told, and a few associates like Goebbels and Goering, who dictate every move of the people's lives, and who can, in this age of rising prices and necessary cost of living, say to an entire nation, "Wages cannot be raised."

The Cardinal answered his own question by pointing to the incredible spy system and the moral-atrocity propaganda used by the existing regime, "in comparison to which the war-time propaganda is almost like bedtime stories for children."

Chicago Catholics, the Cardinal pointed out, would feel a natural sympathy for the religious communities of men and women under attack in Germany since many of them are represented in Chicago, such as the Franciscan Fathers, the Alexian Brothers, and communities of nuns that have come from Germany and are doing charitable work in that city. But he dwelt upon a further reason, which should appeal to Catholics throughout the nation, the well-grounded fear that such a thing may happen here. *Hodie mihi, cras tibi* ("it will befall thee tomorrow what befalls me today"), said the Cardinal.

We in this country can but dimly visualize the intensity and malignity of the campaign that the Nazi Government is waging to separate from their religion, from their parents, from Christian Faith and from God the 2,000,000 children now being educated in Catholic schools in Germany. The means used for this purpose are precisely the same as some of those employed so effectively by the Bolshevists of Soviet Russia; espionage of children against their parents, spreading of distrust for anything but State-controlled education, active anti-Christian propaganda in the State schools, regimentation of youth. Added to these is a weapon of unspeakable dishonesty and foulness: the propaganda against Christian educators on the score of immorality. No attention is paid to the fact that with very few exceptions these immorality trials have been against mere lay employes, janitors, garden-

ers, etc., not Religious at all, or against persons long since discharged from Religious Communities. A large proportion of such were poor devils of unemployed who at the break-up of the World War found their way to religious institutions where they were accepted for menial duties.

The lurking threat of the Nazi situation for Catholics in other countries than Germany is contained in the sinister language used by the Berlin *Völkischer Beobachter* in its issue of March 19 of this year, commenting on Pope Pius XI's Encyclical against atheistic Communism: "He who combats the opponent of Bolshevism says plainly enough, which front he has decided to join." In other words, if you are not ready to hand yourself and your children body and soul over to an insanely anti-Catholic Government, you are a friend of Bolshevists and Communists, and worthy of all the anathemas that fall upon their heads.

It is an appalling instance of the ease with which the defense of Christendom against one insidious foe may be used in the interests of another that is ostensibly its sworn opponent, but in actuality is achieving a precisely similar end, the destruction of the Christian religion and the total subordination of the individual to the State.

Certain elements in this country, alleged political and social conservatives, would prefer to see atheism taught openly in every class-room than infringe upon their own arbitrary concept of "Americanism" by permitting religious education in the schools. Such persons are as easy a mark for infection with the Nazi child-snatching philosophy as are their alleged liberal compatriots for inoculation with Communist soul-devouring methods. Anti-Communism, of the merely political type, can be made a cloak for evil doings as well as Communism. The Cardinal's warning to earnest prayer should surely not go unheeded.

PRESS-GAG IN GERMANY

ONE of the simplest ways to acquaint oneself with the appalling religious situation in Germany is to examine the Catholic press, and papers published in the Catholic regions of Germany, which were once practically equal to Catholic periodicals. An outstanding Catholic weekly, for instance, not only has no mention of the Pope's Encyclical, *Mit brennender Sorge*—though it does quote a few lines from the companion Encyclical on Communism—but is obliged to print over two pages of balderdash by the notorious Alfred Rosenberg, by Dr. Ley, and other *Leiters,* attacking the parish schools, denouncing "abuse of the pulpit," declaring religion a private affair, etc.

The aim of the persecutors is seen in the compulsion exercised to make Catholics read the most repulsive details of the widely advertised moral-atrocity propaganda. A periodical, for instance, published in the heart of Catholic Westphalia, is obliged to devote a whole page to excerpts from speeches and testimony at the recent immorality trials. Always the same point is urged, that these matters are not exceptional, but are frequent among priests and Brothers; that ecclesiastical Superiors always connive at their concealment, etc. Evidently the aim is not to uphold public morals, but to poison the minds of Catholics against priests and Religious, and all charitable works.

THE GREAT SUPPER

SOME ascetical writers see in tomorrow's Gospel (Luke, xiv, 16-24) a foretype of the Most Blessed Eucharist. Examination of the text will show that it refers, rather, to Our Lord's invitation to come into His Messianic Kingdom.

We are told that a man "invited many" to a great supper. Then, by way of a second invitation, he sent his servants to remind the guests that all was ready, and we read that three, typical of all the others, excused themselves. The first said that he had bought a farm which he wished to inspect, the second that he must try five yoke of oxen which he had just purchased, and the third that he had just been married. Whereat the master of the feast became angry. He bade his servants go into the streets and lanes "and bring in hither the poor and the feeble, the blind and the lame," and when there was still room for others, to "go out into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in."

Now these excuses seem to have some foundation; at least the reluctant guests were not detained by anything that was in itself blameworthy. But that is the point of the parable. The Fathers interpret it to mean first the Pharisees and those among the Jews who rejected God's servants, the inspired prophets, inviting them to come into the Messianic Kingdom. Next, it can be applied to all who hear the first invitation but allow worldly and material considerations to keep them from accepting it. Their occupations, not in themselves sinful, so absorb their minds that they have no time to give to the Kingdom. They are ruled by that "worldliness" denounced by the ascetics, and in the end it blinds them to the needs of their souls, and deafens them to the call of the King.

Men of this type seem to be numerous in this age when philanthrophy takes the place of charity, and love of God is set aside for a vague love of "humanity." We find them even among Catholics. These have heard the first invitation to the Kingdom, and are in fact, Catholics. But they are not deeply interested in the affairs of the Kingdom. They are interested only in this world. If they do not actually reject the second invitation—some do—they are all too often remembered as the Catholic ancestors of a non-Catholic or anti-Catholic generation.

But the poor and the feeble, the blind and the lame, those whom this world looks down upon, listen to God's servants, accept the invitation, and gladly go into the supper. Blessed are we if in their company we hear the message. For we shall go in with them to the Kingdom that is theirs, the Kingdom of God, and with them sit down to the Great Supper.

CHRONICLE

AT HOME. On May 18, Homer Martin, President of the United Automobile Workers of America launched a drive to unionize the employees of Henry Ford. Previously on May 14, Ford officials had taken the offensive against the proposed unionization of their workers. A personal message from Mr. Ford warned his 150,000 men not to put their "necks in an iron collar.". . . On May 19, a radio telephone service between America and China was opened. Officials in Washington conversed with Chinese in Shanghai. It was morning in America, evening in Shanghai. . . . On May 17, a special committee named by the American Bar Association pronounced President Roosevelt's Supreme Court reorganization proposal to be unconstitutional. . . . Erection of a Federal Power Administration was recommended by the Brookings Institution report submitted to the Senate Governmental Reorganization Committee, May 17. . . . The proposed transatlantic air race to commemorate the tenth anniversary of Lindbergh's solo flight to Paris was banned by the Commerce Department. . . . The war between the A.F.L. and the C.I.O. continued, with the A. F.L. opening a nation-wide drive for control of labor relations on transit lines. . . . Civil Service Commission statistics revealed that the number of Federal employes is larger than at any time since the World War. In 1918 the figure was 917,760. Today it is 829,193. . . . The first commercial round-trip plane flight over the North Atlantic was completed May 14 by Henry T. Merrill and his co-pilot, John S. Lambie, Jr. . . . The brief strike in the Jones & Laughlin steel plants in Pittsburgh came to an end, May 14. . . . On May 17, the administration-sponsored Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1937, containing essential features of the original AAA and the Bankhead compulsory production control laws, invalidated by the Supreme Court, was started through Congressional processes. . . . On May 17, the Supreme Court upheld a Louisiana tax on chain stores. The law is based on the number of stores in the whole system regardless of State lines.

THE PRESIDENT. Speeding northward, May 13, after his fishing vacation in Texas waters, President Roosevelt chatted with reporters in his private car. He declared he was going ahead with all New Deal objectives, including the aims of the invalidated Agricultural Adjustment Act and the stabilization of farm prices, the "ever-normal granary" plan. Postmaster General Farley boarded the train at Indianapolis, with the latest information concerning the attitude of Congress toward the Supreme Court reorganization scheme. . . . Following the President's arrival in Washington, word spread through Capitol Hill that he still stood adamant against compromise on his Court plan. . . . On May 18, the President received the new German Ambassador, Dr. Hans H. Dieckhoff, who replaces Dr. Hans Luther. On the same day the Chief Executive approved the official delegation named to represent the United States at the International Labor Conference in Geneva on June 3. . . . The President told reporters a message manifesting his desires for minimum wages and maximum hours on a national scale would go to Congress this session. . . . On May 19, Mr. Roosevelt nominated Sumner Welles to be Under-Secretary of State and R. Walton Moore to be Counselor of the State Department. Both are now Assistant Secretaries. Mr. Moore is seventy-eight years of age. . . . At 9:15 A.M., May 18, a messenger arrived at the White House. The President was in bed reading newspapers. Upon seeing the letter, he threw aside the papers, hastily pencilled an answer. The letter announced the resignation of Willis Van Devanter as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. . . .

JUSTICE VAN DEVANTER. On May 17, Justice Van Devanter, one of the most consistent foes of New Deal legislation, sat on the Supreme Court bench delivering an oral opinion. The next morning he announced publicly he would retire on June 2 from "regular and active" service. Justice Van Devanter was appointed to the Supreme Court by President Taft in 1910. He is the oldest associate member in point of service, and the second oldest in the matter of years, having just celebrated his seventy-eighth birthday. A lawyer in Cheyenne when cattle thieves and vigilantes still roamed over Wyoming, Van Devanter became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Wyoming at the age of thirty. In 1897, President McKinley made him an Assistant Attorney General. In 1903 he became United States Circuit Court judge; in 1910 he ascended to the country's highest tribunal. Among the New Deal legislation vetoed by Justice Van Devanter were the NRA, the AAA, the Gold Clause, the Railroad Pensions, the original Frazier-Lemke Act. He voted favorably, however, on the TVA, the Neutrality Act, the revised Railway Labor Act, the second Frazier-Lemke law and the Roosevelt-Litvinov agreement. Under the revised retirement law, he will receive a salary of $20,000 annually. Still vigorous in his seventy-eighth year, he is an ardent duck hunter. Benefit checks from the AAA were some time ago forwarded to his farm in Maryland. Having voted against the AAA, he returned the checks.

THE CONGRESS. On May 18, seven Democrats of the Senate Judiciary Committee joined with three Republican members to send President Roosevelt's Supreme Court reorganization bill to the Senate

with an adverse report. By a vote of ten to eight the Committee vetoed the President's plan. Now that President Roosevelt will have his first opportunity since he took office in March, 1933, to appoint a member of the Supreme Court, observers felt the circumstances surrounding the Court bill were profoundly altered; that the Chief Executive might consider a compromise or withdraw the plan altogether. . . . On May 19 the identical Child Labor Law which Congress enacted in 1916 and which the Supreme Court invalidated in 1918 was introduced in the Senate by Senator Black of Alabama. The measure would forbid shipment in interstate or foreign commerce of any industrial product made by an establishment employing child labor, the legal age ranging from fourteen to sixteen. . . . On May 19, the House received word the President had vetoed its authorization of $5,000,000 for Federal participation in New York's 1939 World Fair, on the ground the grant was excessive.

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CARDINAL MUNDELEIN. On May 18, Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago, assailed the German Government for its persecution of the Catholic Church. He showed the fight was to take the children away from Christian influence; referred to Hitler as an "Austrian paper-hanger and a poor one at that"; to Goebbels as the "crooked Minister of Propaganda." The Cardinal recalled how bitterly Germany resented propaganda directed against it during the World War; emphasized that the present propaganda of the Hitler regime against the Catholic Church makes the Allies' stories sound like "bedtime stories for children.". . . In Germany on May 19, the news services, the press, the radio launched a bitter counter-attack, demanded that the Vatican rebuke the Cardinal. The *Angriff*, organ of Goebbels, at first printed the reference to the "Austrian paper-hanger," later deleted it. Other papers merely spoke of "outrageous libels against the Fuehrer and Reich Chancelor." Reports from Rome said churchmen there felt Cardinal Mundelein had every right to voice his opinion. . . . A large pilgrimage from the dioceses of Cologne and Muenster in Germany visited the Pope in Castel Gandolfo; the Holy Father said to them: "Tell every one in Germany that the common Father is always with his children in their suffering. Tell everyone that the Pope thinks always of his children, that he is writing and will write more and that he prays every day, every day, every day."

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SPAIN. On May 15, Premier Francisco Caballero presented his resignation to President Manual Azaña of the Valencia Government. He was immediately commissioned to form a new Government, but Communist opposition thwarted his efforts. Following Caballero's inability to construct a Ministry, President Azaña commissioned Dr. Juan Negrin, Socialist, former Finance Minister with the task. Negrin succeeded. Anarchist and Syndicalist representatives were excluded from the new Cabinet. . . . The new Government faces vigorous opposition from Anarchist groups. . . . General Emilio Mola's Nationalist troops entered Amorebieta on May 18. Reds had fired the town before retreating. Refugees entering Nationalist lines told tales of horror. One woman declared: "Militiamen put pistols against our chests, tried to take our young children, saying they would be sent to Russia. Some gave up their children, but most of us said we would rather be shot.". . . General Mola's lines were drawing a constantly smaller circle around Bilbao.

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FOOTNOTES. Nazis closed a Catholic boys' seminary in Heiligenstadt, Germany, May 15. The "propaganda trials" continued. . . . Italian exports in the first quarter of this year increased 198 per cent over the same period in 1936. The 1936 exports were low owing to sanctions. The Italian Government assumed control over the country's leading ship-building yards as part of its policy to control enterprises vitally connected with national defense. . . . King Victor Emmanuel and Queen Elena of Italy visited Budapest. . . . A revolt against King Zog's Albanian Government appeared to have been crushed by May 19. The insurrection was prompted by resentment of Zog's westernizing decrees, especially the one permitting unveiling of women. . . . In Tabasco, Mexico, the Governor Victor Fernandez Manero, May 18, said he would allow Catholics to pray before religious images in their homes, but contemplated no change in the Constitution of the State forbidding unmarried priests. . . . In Ireland, President deValera pointed to the absurdity of England's demanding land annuities from Ireland while refusing to pay the English debt to the United States. Against vigorous opposition, deValera pushed through the Dail a bill to give the Free State's last Governor General, Donal Buckley, a gratuity of 2,000 pounds with a yearly pension of 500 pounds for life. . . . Important diplomatic conversations continued in Paris. Mr. Litvinov, Soviet Foreign Commissar, visited the French Foreign Office. Later Dr. Guido Schmidt, Austrian Foreign Minister, was closeted with French diplomatic heads. Reports leaked out that the French-Russian treaty was being strengthened; that Austria, despairing of Italian aid against Germany, was seeking French assistance. . . . In London the Imperial Conference was opened. Prime Minister Joseph A. Lyons of Australia proposed a pact between Pacific powers. Announcement was made that the Duke of Windsor and Mrs. Wallis Warfield will be married June 3. No member of the royal family will attend. Mrs. Warfield will have the title: "Her Royal Highness," will rank eighth in the Empire. . . . President Cárdenas of Mexico on May 16 urged officials to promote the socialistic education of Mexican youth. . . . The native Assembly of Java requested Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands to grant dominion status to the Netherlands East Indies within ten years. . . . On May 15, all Denmark celebrated the silver jubilee of King Christian X. . . . Viscount Snowden, first English Socialist to become Chancelor of the Exchequer, died May 15.

CORRESPONDENCE

REPORTER

EDITOR: Mr. Moley has called my attention to the Comment section of AMERICA (May 1), which contained an interesting paragraph referring to our report that the State Department is convinced that American sentiment favors the Loyalists.

As editor of the "For Your Information" page of *News-Week*, in which this report appeared, I want to point out that the information was not "merely gratuitously advanced by *News-Week*." All the information in our paragraph on the subject came from a highly reliable State Department source.

We personally agree with many of the points made in AMERICA'S Comment, but we do not express opinions on the "For Your Information" page, merely report the facts.

New York, N. Y. EDWARD W. BARRETT

SPANISH AUTONOMY

EDITOR: The situation for the past week at Valencia, Barcelona and Bilbao urges a few comments for which I had not space in my article, *Basque Catholics and Spanish Communists* (May 1). The daily propaganda has deceived many Catholics as to the future of Spain if the Nationalists win. I refer especially to this question of regionalism and local autonomy. For one instance of many: George Shuster has written that the Basque Nationalists are fighting to escape "the clutches of a totalitarian tyranny." That is a misunderstanding not only of the Basque problem but of the policy of all the anti-Revolutionary forces for the past six years. The following facts should be noted:

1. Navarre is Basque. The northern half of Navarre is the most Basque district in the four Provinces. All Navarre is the most Catholic province in Spain. It repudiated the Basque Nationalists and elected every one of its eight Deputies in opposition to the so-called Nationalists. In the other three provinces the CEDA Catholics polled as many votes as the Nationalists, probably more, for the Nationalist vote was considerably increased by bargaining with the Reds. San Sebastian is the most Basque of the big towns in the three provinces, the only big town in which Basque is the language spoken by a majority. Yet on the eve of the elections Gil Robles spoke there to an enthusiastic meeting of 12,000 and promised them autonomy.

2. The Catholics of Spain have not been opposed to autonomy of any region. *El Debate* always advocated autonomy. So did Gil Robles, also for Catalonia. It was some features of the autonomy proposed that they opposed. The sequel in Barcelona shows that they were right.

3. An utterly false impression some people have is that Madrid opposed autonomy. What was Madrid? The parliament of the whole nation. The most violent opposition to some features of the Catalan *Estatuto* (in 1932-3) came from the Aragon and Valencian deputies. These two regions are next-door neighbors to Catalonia. The most violent speech in the debate came from an Aragon Socialist.

4. The past week has shown that even the Caballero Government had to assert its authority in Catalonia, sending there not only its military but also a police force to preserve order.

5. The Carlists have always been autonomists and they are now in every part of Spain enthusiastic supporters of Franco.

6. So far as Franco has outlined his future political program it is in accordance with Spain's political, native, democratic traditions: to deliver Spain from the gallicized politicians of the past two centuries. I have just received from Spain the political program of the Spanish Phalanxists (the group that was dubbed Fascist). It is against a restoration of the monarchy, is thoroughly democratic, and with little amendment would be quite in accordance with Catholic principles.

Elmira, N. Y. OWEN B. MCGUIRE

HEATH

EDITOR: On April 24 you published a letter of mine in which I stated that Professor Federico de Onis was organizing Spanish teachers in favor of the Reds in Spain and that, since Professor de Onis was editor of Spanish texts for Heath & Co., this firm should be notified that Catholic schools could get along without Heath texts unless those activities of Professor de Onis ceased. I have received a letter from Professor de Onis in which he assures me that he has had nothing to do with such an organization; he states that he has taken neither side in the Spanish civil war. Apparently, then, my information was incorrect and I take pleasure in correcting the mistake and particularly in withdrawing my suggestion that Catholic schools cease patronizing Heath & Co., since the reason for that suggestion appears to have no foundation.

Mobile, Ala. P. H. YANCEY, S.J.

REFLECTIONS

EDITOR: Granting that Peter Whiffin's much discussed article is in many respects exaggerated and unfair, let us with shame admit that it contains a percentage of truth. We have entirely too many well-to-do luxury-loving men in the hierarchy and

priesthood and not enough Saints Francis of Assisi. If only one out of every ten of us approached the charity and zeal of Saint Francis, America would soon be a Christian nation and the menace of Communism would be forever dead. The slogan of Frederick Ozanam, "Clothe Faith in the garb of charity and you will Christianize the masses," is not given the constant consideration and application that it deserves.

But that Peter Whiffin is both right and wrong let me prove by the simple method of telling in all humility my own story: I am sixty-five years of age. I am, and have been for more than thirty years, the pastor of a large city parish with four assistants working with me. I have built an expensive church, school, convent and gymnasium. Millions of dollars have passed through my hands, but my total personal assets are less than $2,000. (No, I did not lose money in the stock-market crash.) The bishop or priest who dies possessed of anything approaching wealth dies in disgrace and, if he bequeaths anything approaching wealth to relatives, he is a scandal to the Church.

Peter Whiffin finds fault with million-dollar monasteries etc., just as others found fault with my million-dollar church. They wanted to know why the money was not given to the poor, overlooking the fact that I *was* distributing that million dollars to the poor in the most practical manner possible. Distributing it in a way that did not humiliate them. I created jobs for laborers and artisans by the hundreds. The money, for the most part, was collected from the well-to-do and distributed to the worthy poor.

Peter Whiffin implies that the poor have stopped rapping at our doors. Certainly not at mine, although I live in rather an exclusive part of a city. Have we forgotten the poor? This writer can only speak for himself. He calls upon an average of fifty sick poor every week. (Not so bad for a sixty-five-year-old pastor of a large parish, but how many young or old can make a similar boast?) He repeatedly carries food to them, sometimes substantial food, other times little luxuries. He often sits beside their beds and eats it with them. When the need is evident, he buys and gives them clothing. Seventy-five per cent of these sick poor are non-Catholics. Result: just three days ago one of them, a woman, said: "You make me want to be a Catholic." Not long since a man, the son of a Methodist minister, said: "I want to know more about your religion." Later I baptized him. I could cite innumerable similar instances.

I am quite convinced that there are many, many priests who could tell stories far more impressive than the above, and it was not fair for Peter Whiffin to include them in his sweeping condemnation.

However, am I blameless? Not by any means. Whilst not living extravagantly, I could live on less. Much less. For instance: I own and drive a low-priced car. It is essential in my work, but I use it for pleasure driving also. A Saint Francis would not. There are other luxuries which I and others might well dispense with.

Address withheld — FATHER BLANK

PUZZLED

EDITOR: What puzzles me is this: Why can't we, as Catholics, work together?

When the Hierarchy led the Legion of Decency, the result drew not only the respect of all Americans but also that of other nations, climaxed by the Pope's plea to other countries to do likewise.

Recently, *Our Sunday Visitor* made a blunder. The *Pittsburgh Catholic* blazed out the injustice.

One of the contributors to the *Commonweal* wrote an article on the Spanish situation. He was immediately exposed, making the article in question all the more prominent.

Father Curran organized a New York meeting to enlighten people on Communism. The *Catholic Worker* at once flashed in headlines an article telling him how not to conduct such a meeting.

If we are all working in the grand army of Christ, why can't we work in close friendly relationship? Why couldn't Catholic editors instead of flaunting in headlines the slips that pass in the night, take up the argument privately, draw attention, of course, to mistakes in a friendly, brotherly manner and let each editor have the opportunity of retracting gracefully, generously, and honestly?

And why must we have so many almost duplicate Catholic organizations—The National Catholic Alumnae Association, The National Catholic Women of America and all the other national Catholic organizations for women that are good in themselves yet that scatter efforts because of multiplied interests?

Why can't we unite our interests, pool our energies, and pull together as Catholics? The Communists know how to do it!

Kirkwood, Mo. — FLORENCE LAUBETTE

RELIGION COURSES

EDITOR: In view of the fact that there has been considerable talk in various parts of the country about introducing courses of religion in the public schools and especially because this is most necessary, would it not be wise for the Catholic editors, shortly to assemble for their annual convention, to fully discuss this issue? Objections will be manifold, but a determined effort to see a fixed policy put into effect will prove very remunerative. Few issues of more importance now confront our country.

Cincinnati, O. — JOSEPH EDMUND

LAW AND ORDER

EDITOR: A masterful work of reporting is Father Blakely's article, *A Cumberland Sheriff* (May 1). Man's inhumanity to man is no secret, but I was previously unaware that it is a profession in some parts of the country. Father Blakely and the Senate Civil Liberties Committee deserve an enthusiastic round of applause.

Seattle, Wash. — VINCENT MCGRATH

LITERATURE AND ARTS

EILEEN DUGGAN NEW ZEALAND'S POET

ALFRED BARRETT, S.J.

WHY is most religious verse so bad and why does so little religious verse reach the highest levels of poetry? Largely, T. S. Eliot believes, because of a pious insincerity. "The capacity for writing poetry is rare; the capacity for religious emotion of the first intensity is rare; and it is to be expected that the existence of both capacities in the same individual should be rarer still." For Mr. Eliot's peace of mind it is to be hoped that he is familiar with the work of Eileen Duggan, New Zealand's *rara avis*, who in her volume, *New Zealand Bird Songs*, and in her other occasional verse abundantly satisfies both of his requirements.

If Mr. Eliot reads Eileen Duggan's poems in book-form, he will have been more fortunate than the present writer, who over a period of years has had to be content with copying them on the rare intervals of their appearance in Catholic magazines, each serving as plinth to a column of prose. Feeling that she should be much better known than she is, I looked vainly for signs of critical appreciation (some may have appeared), until the recent discovery in the *Month* for March, 1935, of an article by Father Martindale. Only once have I heard her publicly mentioned. It was at a Catholic Press Convention several years ago, at a time when editors were particularly glum about the outlook for Catholic letters. Suddenly, Most Rev. Hugh C. Boyle, Bishop of Pittsburgh, rose to speak. "We may not have an outstanding novelist to boast of," he said, "but while Eileen Duggan of New Zealand continues to write we need never apologize for Catholic poetry."

This article is a confession of ignorances. Let no reader petition the editor or the writer for a bibliography on Eileen Duggan, for details of her hobbies, personal appearance or views on life and art. If her publisher's address should be of any help, Father Martindale gives it: H. H. Tombs, Wellington. Having sought for years to get some of Eileen Duggan's poems in book-form, the English Jesuit, on a visit to New Zealand, not only met with the book, but met the author.

All that I know about Eileen Duggan is her work. That, however, is all one needs to know. Space limitations permit quoting in full only one of Miss Duggan's shorter pieces. She practises almost always the fine art of the one-word title and has called this poem *Resurrection*:

> Lo, how the butterfly, the paladin of air,
> To whom blue acres are baronial things,
> Who takes them as an eldest son the name,
> Or owl the night,
> Before the time of wings
> Lies blind, without direction,
> Entombed, enwound,
> Forgotten and alone,
> Till comes its Easter night
> Without a sound,
> And lo, this cavalier of light,
> This breathless one,
> Rides up into the sun.
> So even I,
> When wings lift from my clod,
> Breaking the sky,
> May shimmer up to God.

Hilaire Belloc, in introducing the poems of Ruth Pitter—who shared with Miss Duggan, until lately, the shade of flamboyant and inferior talents such as Edith Sitwell's—characterizes her as the possessor of two gifts: a perfect ear and exact epithet. A reading of what I consider to be Eileen Duggan's finest poem, *Pilgrimage*, will show that she also possesses this classic combination.

She pictures the bells of all the world, unlimbered from their spires in every steeple-loft from pole to pole, going on an Easter pilgrimage to Jerusalem, where they float untethered over Jaffa gate "to fling one peal when angels cheat the stone." Every wind is wet with carillons, she says, with the music of "the pure, abstracted Himalayan chimes," with great ghosts of clappers from Russian belfries and "sweet, wind-sextoned tremblers from Cathay." Then there are the "bells of Ireland, jesting all the way,"

> The English bells, slow-bosomed as a swan,
> The queenly, weary din of Notre Dame,
> And the Low Countries ringing back the sea;
> Then Spain, the Moor still moaning through the saint,
> The firry, frosty bells of Germany,
> And on before them, baying, sweeping down,
> The heavy, joyful pack of thunder-jowls
> That tongue hosannas from the leash of Rome. . . .

This is not the mere imitative tintinnabulation of Poe, but the *genus loci* of each nation set to the music of its bells. The poem is more than that. It is an avowal of humility. For Eileen Duggan feels that perhaps "one little, gaping country bell," blown from its weather-boarding in the South, from her remote land "down under," may be too lost to keep its covenant. If its voice (which is her voice) seems not to be heard in the concourse at Jerusalem, then "know that its dumbness riots more than sound."

Belloc is fond of repeating that really good verse seems to have a certain quality of *hardness;* so that, in the long run, it will be discovered, as a gem is discovered in mud. Miss Duggan can afford to wait till the mud of what sometimes passes for poetry shall have washed away to reveal the shining facets of such images as those in *Presumption.* It is a poem about the saints she most admires, about the kind that best suit her "poor Malvolian mind." Joan and John and Teresa "of the glancing wit," all these are too great for her—"But Bernadette would do. Men called her dense." She likes most the ones that were not always just, "whose palm was won in whorls of dust," such as Peter and Magdalen and Augustine, and the "great flying soul of Paul—Who once was Saul." Finally, being in Francis Ledwidge's phrase, a "poor, bird-hearted singer," she thinks admiringly of

> . . . the superb de Sales, a holy crane,
> As easy-minded as a plain.

So bird-minded, indeed, is Eileen Duggan, that Father Martindale, to the exclusion of her other aspects, devotes his entire article to her bird songs, based on Maori legends about the Moa, the Hihi, or "Stitch Bird," the Goodwit, the Tui, the White Crane and the Bittern. I am glad to see that he recognizes echoes of Ireland interweaving these songs, for James Stephens, Joseph Campbell, or Ledwidge himself might have written that poignant lyric on the Passion, *Quarantana*:

> Young Christ went groaning up to Quarantana,
> With His tall head flung up against the sky,
> Spring cried to Him from every bush and bramble;
> He passed her slowly by. . . .
>
> And every bird bent sideways in its sorrow,
> And whispered softly to Him as He went,
> "My brightness, are You black and lost in anguish?
> My sweetness, are You spent?"

Every bird, that is, except the careless cuckoo, who, busy about nest-building in flurry and fret, cries its own name over, "nor saw His eyes were wet." So when the young Christ comes smiling down from Quarantana, blessing the birds along the broken lane, He only looks reproachfully on the cuckoo. More obdurate than Peter, it cried and flew off to the west.

> Since then it may not cease its haunted crying,
> Nor ever build a nest.

One of the best signs of Eileen Duggan's permanence is that she challenges variety, writing successfully in many manners. She can speak with the simplicity of the *Fioretti,* as in *Juniper,* where the little friar of the cap and bells confesses that he is wicked—"That's as sure as steel is blue"—but that it does not matter, since Saint Francis has gone before him into Heaven, there to answer for his fool. Then she is suddenly capable of a consciously poetic image, as in *Fire,* where soft flames fly, like "updarting birds of green and blue." While hell fire surely exists, she believes that such beauty can have no place there, for

> Whate'er in hell may lick and flow,
> It's not the simple fires we know.

Unearthly in their freshness are the poems about Our Lady, such as *Dreams* and *Annunciation,* with its "woman, gold-wet, with rainbow eyes, and a border of living butterflies." Here is part of one called *The Name*:

> We make that lovely, sighing sound
> A thing too far away,
> A word and not the little Name
> His Mother used to say.
>
> Why do we never see her stand
> Against the wicket gate,
> A dim blue patience in the dusk—
> "Jesus, come home. It's late?"

In *Epiphany,* Miss Duggan, who calls herself a "paddocks-woman," and as such is timid of strangers, feels that the young Mary might well have blushed and stammered before the King's proud-lidded Gentile faces. But no. She is not abashed before earthly kings who has had once within her doorway an archangel "hot from Heaven."

The strong and splendid current of her thought flows nowhere better than in a recent poem, *Nationality.* It is daringly done, for in it Christ is seen as "the very Jew of Jews," who, since He had not surrendered all mankind to race on that day "of headlong cloaks and boughs," sacrificed not only life but country. Because He was man as well as God, He loved His own "goat-nibbled hills," He loved His "Aramaic brogue—As much as any Norman loves—The accents of La Hogue"; but He loved mankind more than nationality. One finds an apt description of the people in these lines.

> Discountried and diskinged
> And watched from pole to pole,
> A Jew at heart remains a Jew—
> His nation is his soul.

Of living Catholic poets, Eileen Duggan is in the ideal position to challenge her contemporaries. She has the consciousness of what Claudel calls the *sainte réalité,* and the ideal of holiness which Father Hopkins denominated "the handsome heart."

CATHOLIC POETS MARRY

AN announcement from *Monsieur et Madame Frederick Carl Frieseke,* of *Le Mesnil-sur-Blangy,* in France, lets us know that there will be "the Kilmers" again in the ranks of Catholic poets, owing to the marriage, on June 2, of Kenton Kilmer and Frances Frieseke (cf. AMERICA, July 4th issue, Marian Poetry Contest). The new Kilmers will live in Virginia. Nor must it be forgotten that in Indiana we have "the Engels" (or should I say "the Engelses"?) in the happy union of Norbert and Eleanor (Perry). Father Daniel Lord has a slogan for Catholic young people, "Marry your own!" I have one for Catholic poets: "Marry your own!" I hope the practice spreads like an epidemic. L. F.

BOOKS

A BOY'S EYE AND A MAN'S HAND

ARMY WITHOUT BANNERS: ADVENTURES OF AN IRISH VOLUNTEER. *By Ernie O'Malley. Houghton Mifflin Co.* $3.50

IF you were among the many who saw the recent screen version of *The Plough and the Stars*, you have in your memory the picture of the young, escaping Irish officer of the defeated Republican Army, standing at the church door. He has paused to watch with hopeless eyes the Republican flag fluttering to the ground from atop the last surrendered stronghold of the Republic. You will remember his heavy words, "The Risin' is over."

> He thought that he was accepting the inevitable.
> So, surely, thought the English.
> But Ireland thought not.

In *Army Without Banners* you may watch with Ernie O'Malley that flag, green, white and orange, rising slowly and surely from the day of its origin in 1916 to that Monday, April 11, 1921 when the truce between England and Ireland went into effect. And it waved over Ireland, a nation, a Catholic nation, once again. True she had, and she has, a wound six counties deep in her side, but a wound not incurable.

Ernie O'Malley tells his part in the re-forming and growth of the Irish Republican Army, that carried on the battle the world thought lost. It is his own story that he tells as intimately, as fairly, as though he were talking to himself alone. But he is telling the story to you—not hoping to impress or trying to convert, if perchance you are other-minded, but simply and truthfully telling his story for what it is worth. To me it was worth a great deal.

The story of an Irish Volunteer, in an army not only without banners, but an army almost without arms, infiltrating Ireland from end to end, from east to west, living with a much harassed people, who fed their soldiers, concealed them, and outwitted the enemy with simple devices and kindly hearts (the Irish soldiers were "the boys" to them; the enemy "them Tans") is a story that will not fail to stir your blood, to touch your heart and enlighten your mind.

Here and there O'Malley leaves an incident half-told, the end forgotten in some memory of stifled laughter or in the sudden remembered fragrance of sweet clover, but you will not wish to break with questions the rhythm of the Movement, now retarded, now pounding to a breath-taking finish.

He presupposes in his reader a fair knowledge of Irish history, stopping for no explanations. His only setting of the scene is a brief account of his own childhood in the County Mayo and in Dublin—an almost too well-ordered childhood in the home of parents, high-minded beyond the possibility of being of the shoneen (little John Bull) type, but untouched by injustice that did not touch them. It is to Nannie (I think) that we owe the growth of Ernie O'Malley, the carefree medical student of 1916, to the stature of Earnón O'Máille, the Commandant of the Second Southern Division of the Irish Republican Army in 1921.

Nannie was the O'Malley children's nurse, holding a peculiarly Irish position in the household, not regarded as a servant, not usurping the mother's place, but carrying on something of the traditional fosterage of ancient Irish custom. It was from Nannie that he learned the old Irish folk and fairy tales and the depth of Irish love. Nannie's stories had trained the mind that awakened to the call of Country as he read the Proclamation of the Irish Republic—a proclamation to set Irish blood racing through Irish veins.

There is but one note missing in the chord that Ernie O'Malley, strikes in the Catholic heart—a note pitifully absent, that should sound in harmony with a Catholic's love for his priest. He all but ignores him, and what he does say is unsympathetic. The Catholic Irish have a tender, a confiding, a protecting name for the priest, *Soggarth Aroon*. He must have earned it. Ernie O'Malley has not failed to see and report the result of the priest's work—the mountain cabin come upon in the wind-blown dark where Ernie joined in the Rosary; the Irish boys, taken prisoners, kneeling to say their night prayers in the common guard room; his own beads taken from him and restored by one of the Auxiliaries, saying: "You will need these tonight." If, indeed, there is something awry between him and his Church, it must still be the subject of Nannie's prayers. Could not we, in gratitude for a patriot's well-told story, join in that prayer?

Two terrible accounts—one of the brutal beating in prison of an Irish soldier by an English officer in an attempt to extort information—the other, the execution of three English officers captured by the I. R. A.—will leave you, with Ernie O'Malley, unable to speak, "till we had crossed a good many fields, where wind had snaked the rye grass." But read this book if history, seen by a boy's poet-true eye and written by a man's hand, means anything at all to you.

AILEEN TEMPLETON

THE WONDER OF THE WORLD

THE AMAZING FREDERICK. *By Gertrude Slaughter. The Macmillan Co.* $3.75

MRS. Gertrude Slaughter gives us a new phase indeed of the life of Frederick II, King of Sicily and Emperor of the Romans. But the study leaves us wondering. Frederick emerges as the truly "amazing" from the pages of the book. The story is of so long ago that we should like to have better knowledge of the authorities from whose testimony this biography was reconstructed. There is no bibliography listed in the work beyond the statement in the preface that the most important source were the letters and documents collected in the *Historia Diplomatica Frederici Secundi*, and the only other reliable sources were the annals and chronicles, the tales and poetry, of the time. But only occasionally are these so quoted that evaluation of the witnesses is possible.

There is a wealth of vivid narrative and description which challenge, and no footnote offered to answer the challenge. Somehow the phrase "Mother Ecclesia" which occurs on and off in the text seems to have a sinister sound in the text. The Popes who occupied the See of Peter during the reign of Frederick seem to suffer by comparison with the hero in a way that connotes one-sided interpretation. Nor is it clear whether it is the soliloquy of Frederick or the judgment of the author which declares that "the Western Church was so stupid that they could not see that the Mohammedans too revered Jesus Christ and had a right to hold His tomb sacred."

This may be a key to the interpretation of the character which permeates the work. Even the double excommunication of Frederick arouses sympathy for his tactics rather than admiration for the courage of the Pope. If mere material achievements and no end of selfish calculations and shrewdness, even at the expense of sub-

mission are a test of greatness, then this new biography may advertise Frederick II in Latin and in Greek mottos, as it does on the title page, "The Wonder of the World."

JOSEPH ROUBIK

AN ANALYSIS OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

MIND AND THE MYSTERY. *By C. J. Eustace. Longmans, Green and Co.* $2.50

THE modern world is only too much sold to the philosophy of rationalism. One of the fundamental tenets of that philosophy is the rejection of any knowledge that man can attain through faith in a Divine revelation. Professor Eustace has attacked this attitude which prevails in our universities by attempting an analysis of human knowledge.

The first part of his book deals with the problem of the various kinds of knowledge. Here the delimitations of the human mind are laid down and page upon page of this part makes good reading for the conceited minds who subscribe to a confined and confining rationalism. The reviewer remarks that the questions dealt with are not easy of comprehension; we hope that every non-Catholic professor in the land will read the book; we also hope that he will not throw it aside because it demands thought, study and reflection.

In the last part of the book the relation of human knowledge and the knowledge of faith is treated. In itself the problem is more difficult; yet I think that it will be found to be easier reading. The book contains some very excellent chapters on the act of faith, and, since the terminology is more known than the scholastic language of the first part, I do not doubt that non-Catholics who read the book will be much attracted by the author's presentation.

The reference to non-Catholic readers does not mean that this is not an excellent book for a Catholic library. Here and there one may feel that a wee phrase might be more accurately turned, or occasionally the rendition of the scholastic Latin more neatly Englished. But clarity and succinctness are the marks of the book.

WILLIAM J. MCGARRY

FACTUAL REFUTATION OF COMMUNISM IN ACTION

COLLECTIVISM: A FALSE UTOPIA. *By William H. Chamberlin. The Macmillan Co.* $2

HUNDREDS of volumes have been published during the last two decades upon the Communist experiment in the U. S. S. R. In 1934 appeared *Russia's Iron Age,* by William H. Chamberlin, the *Christian Science Monitor* correspondent at Moscow for some twelve years. Amid the chaos of conflicting propaganda, this volume became the first great objective story of Communism in action. Today it still remains the classic authoritative work in this field. One year later appeared the monumental treatise *The Russian Revolution* by the same author, but the field was confined to "War Communism" and the volumes have been restricted chiefly to reference shelves.

With tactics and conditions changing so rapidly in the U. S. S. R., all students of Communism have awaited a new book by Chamberlin bringing his subject up to date. *Collectivism: A False Utopia* has not only fulfilled this demand, but this gifted chronicler and analyst of world affairs has gone farther. He has extended his treatment so as to include Fascism and Nazism. These totalitarian systems with their brutal dictatorship and suppression of natural rights are portrayed in vigorous contrast to democracy with all its shortcomings.

We or They, H. F. Armstrong's contrast of the same conflicting systems, blazed the way in recent books, but Chamberlin brings to the subject a wealth of factual data to be found in no other publication.

Three points are convincingly driven home. First, that American democracy with all its flaws is a true "Utopia" compared to either Communism or Fascism (Nazism). Secondly, Fascism and Communism are ruthlessly exposed as possessing a common philosophy of brutal dictatorship. The wealth of proof adduced might be recommended to the three million members of the Communist controlled "League Against War and Fascism" who have been deluded by the propaganda that Russian democracy is the savior of the world against the growth of Fascism.

Lastly, and most valuable of all, is the author's conclusive proof that the laborer, the proletariat, is worse off under Communism than under Capitalism. The American workingman is not primarily interested in theories of government or economics; he desires a living wage and security of employment. Chamberlin shatters once and for all the propaganda that Communism provides even economic democracy for the laborer.

With unionization sweeping over America like an avalanche, our greatest danger lies in the regrettable fact that legitimate labor has few trained leaders. The Communist Party with its skilled agitators is seizing the leadership in one after another of the new unions. *Collectivism: A False Utopia* gives the lie to those "militant" leaders of the "rank and file" who seek to capture sufficient control of union labor to pass from the general strike to civil war and from civil war to Communism with its resultant serfdom of the proletariat.

This book is destined like its predecessor to become the classic authority for factual proof of the degradation of the human being under Communism in action. No student of modern affairs and above all none of the many lecturers against Communism can afford to be without this authoritative analysis of collectivism.

RAYMOND T. FEELY

BOOKS IN BRIEFER REVIEW

DEEP SUMMER. *By Gwen Bristow. Thomas Y. Cromwell Co.* $2

MANY people will read *Deep Summer.* It belongs to that class of creative work that is greatly appreciated and not too seriously discussed. The theme is the now popular one of the rise of Southern prosperity, the great landowners who started in a log cabin and died in huge houses with many square miles of plantation to leave to their sons. Here a Carolina cavalier and a New England girl are the principal characters. Their married troubles and joys are the most important and least interesting part of the book. The girl's development consists in the disintegration of her cumbersome moral rigidity so that her husband's gay, carefree nature and complete lack of principle eventually become for her not only attractive but almost right, and in her old age she finally achieves the peace of tolerance. She has a brother, the popular conception of a New Englander, who has a stormy life for a minor character and whose wife, brought home from New Orleans in a weak moment, involves all the characters in an important episode.

It is a good story, but the author's interests are too divided. All the questions she brings up are in themselves interesting, but she does not handle them beyond their physical emotion. There is one glaring omission which is largely responsible for this lack of depth. Religion played, not a picturesque, but a primary role in the lives of the Puritans of that period. Their moral principles were far more than prejudices, their religion was a philosophy of life.

But we must not be too harsh, Miss Bristow is not untalented. She has created a rich atmosphere and her

powers of pictorial description are most unusual. These characteristics save the book from a bog of insignificance and give a semblance of reality to the stiffness and superficiality of the theme and characters.

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE. *By V. Rev. Adolphe Tanquerey, S.S. Desclée & Co., Belgium.*

THIS volume is a treatise on Ascetical and Mystical Theology which gives a complete and orderly summary of all the questions on the science of the spiritual life and is written especially for seminarians and priests. However, those of the laity who desire to live in a truly Christian manner will find here a well-ordered guide to help them in their effort to attain holiness of life. The character of the treatise is doctrinal and has for its aim the presentation of the fact that Christian perfection is the logical outcome of dogma, especially of the Incarnation. The author presents his theme in a clear, practical manner and without dryness; hence it can very profitably be used for spiritual reading as well as a textbook.

EUROPE IN THE MIDDLE AGES. *By Warren O. Ault. D. C. Heath and Co.* $3.48

AT least half-a-dozen good medieval history textbooks are on the market. Among these the grateful student must include Professor Ault's volume. Even before its recent revision it won high praise. Perhaps the reviewer should let it go at that. Instructors will have their individual preferences, which will often depend upon which salesman has the first, or the last, word.

We cannot, however, forego an expression of regret that none of the newer texts with which we are acquainted is entirely satisfactory. We suspect that our disappointment is to be laid at the door of the various publishers. With an eye on potential buyers, they strain themselves to eliminate anything that might be unpalatable. In our low-brow, earth-bound "civilization" the supernatural is still ruled out of polite discussion. To be specific, it is considered good form to ignore the claims of the Church to be a Divine institution. Whatever else may be said of the prevailing phobia, in the historian of medieval Christendom it results in poor history. In this regard Professor Ault and his publisher, are no better, nor worse, than their nearest rivals.

With the above reservation, the book under review may be commended. The author is sincerely in sympathy with his subject; he has studied the march of events; and he makes it easy for the student to follow him. In our secular schools the book will afford relatively wholesome food; in Catholic schools its incomplete story can be supplemented by any alert instructor; in the hands of the general reader it will be worth more than nine-tenths of the books that rank as best sellers.

THE CROSS AND THE BEATITUDES. *By Fulton J. Sheen. P. J. Kenedy and Sons.* $1

WITH a richness of imagination and clearness of insight characteristic of the author, he presents his readers with this little volume on the Seven Last Words, paralleling them with the Beatitudes. It contains seven chapters, in each of which he selects one of the words from the Cross with one of the Beatitudes, and shows how Christ lived the instructions he preached in His Sermon on the Mount. In a manner to inspire and encourage the militant faithful, Monsignor Sheen contrasts the worldly-minded with those who faithfully follow in the footsteps of the Master.

THE BROKEN TREATY: A STORY OF THE OSAGE COUNTRY. *By W. W. Graves. The Journal Press. St. Paul, Kans.*

CERTAIN incidents of Osage Indian history during the Civil War period furnish the warp and woof of this highly interesting romance. As fiction, the book is thoroughly readable, but its solid content of reliable and moving history gains over even the fiction in interest. Osage Indian life and manners are faithfully portrayed and the beneficent activites of the old historic Catholic Osage mission on the Neosho are set out in due relief.

BY DAY AND BY NIGHT. *By Johan Bojer. D. Appleton Century Co.* $2.50

LEIF SUN, the son of a factory hand, with only a grade-school education, attended a non-commissioned officers' school; as a sergeant, he developed a new machine gun, sold to both sides of warring nations and became a multi-millionaire Parisian, with the Legion of Honor on his lapel. At a hospital, he came upon a boy from his own home town, a boy with legs gone and face shot away. The sight affected his nerves badly. At night he felt surrounded by a legion of ghosts—every one with its face shot away by his machine gun. To find peace and release from remorse, he leaves the gay life of Paris and goes home.

These events are narrated in the first chapter. The story then goes on to tell of his life by day and by night —of days which he sought to fill with normal activity, with friendly companionship, with love—and of his nights when he strove to free himself from the reproaches of a rationalistic Christ, or fought the Tempter who urged him to plan a new and deadlier gun, build a factory, enrich the town folk and thus win back his waning popularity. He becomes the victim of a vile accusation and of a vilifying trial. And he achieves ultimate triumph by throwing the completed model of his new gun into the river and committing suicide. The style is amazingly crystal, striking and forceful. The translation is excellent. The events are of the so-called realistic type, at times, very sordid; the philisophy is rationalistic and the attempt at mysticism quite insincere.

THE PRIEST—A RETREAT FOR PARISH PRIESTS. *By Abbé Planus. Translated by Rev. John L. Zoph. Benziger Bros.* $2.75

WHEN a retreat-master takes the notes or the full text of his discourses and decides to dress them up and exhibit them to the general public as reading matter, there is bound to be a good deal of stiffness and starch in the main effect. The flexibility, the emphasis, the ring of the spoken word is ironed out into soberness; the freedom, held in the common confinement of ink, gets rigidly resentful; the orderly series of meditations and instructions has a "Sunday clothes" appearance and is just a shade unnatural.

The present volume is a case in point. There are splendid thoughts, earnest appeals climaxed by forceful Scriptures, homely but telling comparisons and well-rounded treatment of details and dangers in priestly life. But there is not an explosive epithet in the book. It never gets high-pitched. It is dignified, instructive, but it lacks vehemence. You read it from cover to cover and get suddenly aware that even mentally you have not used italics at all. This would seem to be too bad, because these same thoughts could be fire-tipped in real utterance, and must have done inspirational service. Dressed up for the printer, they are conventionalized. The occasional hint of "fine writing" kills their normal sincerity. In their transfer from tongue to paper, the author's words have lost almost all their light and warmth.

THE TAIL OF THE COMET. *By Mary Cable Dennis. E. P. Dutton and Co.* $2.50

THESE rambling memoirs of the author's father, George W. Cable, and her husband, Alfred Dennis, make the kind of book which seems mainly justified by the pleasure which the author probably felt in writing it. George W. Cable, it will be remembered, was an American short-story writer, and Alfred Dennis was chairman of the Department of History at the University of Wisconsin and the author of substantial works in history and international relations.

The reminiscences, the mention of famous names, and the little pictures of the past are written in a pleasant style, but the book is slight as far as valuable, significant or highly interesting content is concerned. Its intrinsic worth is negligible.

FILMS

THE KING'S PEOPLE. This film is by way of being a fervent footnote to the recent Coronation in England, a newsreel devoted to royalty and sparked by the patriotic presence of the late John Drinkwater. It is the story of the Empire from the reign of Queen Victoria to the present and, with pardonable pride, it stresses the growth and stability of its fortunes. Aside from this enthusiasm, which will not sound too forced at the moment, the pictures are historically interesting, and give a brief summary of the last five reigns. Mr. Drinkwater, besides being interviewed himself, is seen discussing things with such "monarchists" as George Bernard Shaw and Lady Astor. Is this, perhaps, a manifestation of that elusive quantity, the British sense of humor? In any case, it is a superb compromise which brings together in one film the spirit of Victoria and a representative of Fabianism and of more modern Socialism. If you are attracted by the notion of royalty and are sufficiently pro-British, the picture is an unusual event.

PICK A STAR. Another variation on the theme of a local girl making good in Hollywood, this film proves moderately amusing because of the hard work of Patsy Kelly and Laurel and Hardy. It is uneven and takes the plot rather too seriously for its own good. When the financial support of a beauty contest evaporates, the screen-struck winner's fiancé goes to the movie capital to open the gates of fame for her. Through an accident, the lady herself follows and together they muddle through enough complications, sometimes funny and sometimes strained, to make her eventual triumph a joy to all concerned. The cast is largely dotted with ordinarily dependable names, including Jack Haley, Mischa Auer, Lyda Roberti and Rosina Lawrence. Laurel and Hardy manage to inject a lion's share of the comedy into their little skit involving an indigestible harmonica. The piece is recommended for the family. (*MGM*)

THEY GAVE HIM A GUN. There is a great deal of purpose and very little power to this sociological tract on the aftermath of war. It is uncertain melodrama, attempting brutal realism on the one hand and indulging in wispy sentimentality on the other. Two men emerge from the war, one of them an essential coward who is flattered by the feel of a gun in his hands and becomes a gangster, the other a strong, silent type. The gunman is successful in winning the nurse they both love but loses her when his business is exposed. After some pretty tall theatricals, the neurotic gentleman solves all the problems by committing suicide. It was meant, obviously, to prove a connection between the emotional havoc of war and present day crime, but there is small force in its indictment because there is slight credibility to its story. Some of the battle scenes are exciting enough and the players are not altogether overwhelmed by the thesis. Spencer Tracy, Gladys George and Franchot Tone are featured. The film is partly objectionable on the score of the creaky suicide concluding device. (*MGM*)

NIGHT OF MYSTERY. S. S. Van Dine's *Green Murder Case* furnished the mysterious plot of this picture and whatever else went into it must be blamed upon the producers. The net result is not very exciting or even quietly baffling. To begin with, the casting has not proved very happy and Grant Richards hardly approaches the suave urbanity and intuitive wit of the renowned Philo Vance. There is an extraordinary will involved, however, and murder is done amidst a host of suspects, so that the devotees of this sort of thing may find it quite tolerable. Roscoe Karns is a slight Sargeant Heath and the film is unobjectionable for all. (*Paramount*)

THOMAS J. FITZMORRIS

EVENTS

BUOYHOOD days were recalled by recent news items. . . . Where is my wandering buoy, a distracted mariner inquired of passing Lake Erie ships. His five-year-old buoy had run out, drifted away from him, he explained. . . . Fishermen off the coast of Eire discerned what appeared to be a head bobbing on the briny waves. Rowing to the rescue, they found it was only an Irish buoy. . . . A nine-year-old English boy sued his father for injuries sustained while papa was giving him a ride. . . . The crash of another fine relationship was admitted by a Brooklyn candy-store owner. While he grappled with a hold-up man, his pet watchdog bit him in the leg. . . . Discord threatened the felicity of an Eastern home. An eighty-two-year-old husband, feeling the need of a hobby, commenced spending portions of each day standing on his head in front of his house. His wife's vitriolic criticism engendered friction, well-informed gossips disclosed. . . . Amid the general rejoicing, wisps of sadness weaved through Coronation day in London. In Westminster Abbey Queen Mary wept. In a nearby stable an old horse died—the last survivor of the eight grays which helped crown George V twenty-five years ago. . . . Touches out of harmony with the ceremony were glimpsed. Princess Margaret Rose, aged six, yawned in the Archbishop of Canterbury's face; later at a solemn moment tickled her sister, Princess Elizabeth. A peeress in the third row center of the Abbey chewed gum. . . . Deep love was manifested. A string of sausages spelling: "God Save the King" was hung across an East End street by a loyal butcher. . . .

Two taxis waiting on upper Broadway corner. Joe leaves his cab; gets into Louie's. Louie is reading paper.
Joe: What's the news today, Louie?
Louie: It says here an Irishman, St. Brendan, discovered America in 545. He landed in Carolines.
Joe: What've they got the big statue up to that guy, Columbus, for then?
Louie: Maybe they'll take it down now. (Reading) There was a funeral in Central America. The mourners drop the corpse on the road, ride on a merry-go-round for two hours, then take the dead man to the cemetery.
Joe: That ain't right.
Louie: Here's a woman arrested for killing her daughter; here's a daughter on trial for killing her mother. What's the matter with people anyway?
Joe: Not enough of 'em ride in taxis for one thing.
Louie: That ain't it. People ain't got enough religion these days. Get a load of this. A guy named Dr. Henry C. Link, talked to people in sixty-five cities; says seventy-six per cent feel the need for more religion.
Joe: Why don't they get it then?
Louie: They're confused. The guys who do the thinking for the American people ain't really doin' any thinking. This here Dr. Link says: (reading) "The leaders of public thought have accepted the false idols of our modern civilization. The liberal mind is the most destructive influence in this country. The liberal mind is the mind systematically cultivated to question the traditions and morals of the past; the mind habituated to doubt the old and to place credence in the new."
Joe: Boy, you go right through them big words like they was nothing at all. You got education, Louie.
Louie: Don't think the liberal minded give you a liberal tip, Joe. It ain't liberal that way. It's counterfeit. It hands out phoney ideas.
Joe: Why do they call it liberal then?
Louie: Kiddin' the public. The liberal mind ain't liberal. The illiberal mind ain't illiberal.
Joe: It sounds upside down. I guess I'm dumb.
Louie: You ain't as dumb as you look, Joe. It is upside down.

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The PRO PARVULIS BOOK CLUB, Providence, R. I., announces its April selections from all the children's books published during the last two months. For the young "tots," Bible Children, by Blanche Jennings Thompson. Illustrations in color by the famed artist, Kate Seredy.

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